

THE  
**NATURAL SON;**  
*A PLAY,*

IN FIVE ACTS,

BY

*H*  
**AUGUSTUS VON KOTZEBUE** (*A. F. F. v. H.*)

Poet Laureat and Director of the Imperial Theatre at Vienna.

BEING THE ORIGINAL OF

**LOVERS' VOWS,**

NOW PERFORMING WITH UNIVERSAL APPLAUSE, AT THE

*Theatre-Royal, Covent-Garden.*

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TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

By **ANNE PLUMPTRE,**

(AUTHOR OF THE RECTOR'S SON, ANTOINETTE, &c.)

Who has prefixed

**A PREFACE,**

Explaining the Alterations in the Representation; and has  
also annexed

**A LIFE OF KOTZEBUE.**

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1798.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE





## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

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THE flattering Reception which the Natural Son, under the altered Title 'of LOVERS' VOWS, has experienced from an English Audience, in an abridged and mutilated State, affords reason to believe that a complete Translation of so admirable a Drama will entitle itself to a still higher degree of Public Approbation. The Natural Son, since its first appearance in Germany, has uniformly ranked amongst the most favourite productions of the pen of its illustrious Author; its celebrity had long attracted the notice of the Translator, and a perusal of it satisfied her, that it was one of those brilliant Dramatic Meteors, whose lustre ought to be extended from the German to the English horizon.

Her original design was to adapt it to the London Stage, and with this view she actually

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proceeded in the Translation; when, however, she had made considerable progress, she learnt that her design had been already anticipated, and that a Translation by a foreign Gentleman had been placed in the hands of Mrs. Inchbald, by the Manager of Covent Garden Theatre, for the purpose of being adapted to representation—Satisfied, therefore, that the Work was in much more able hands, she totally relinquished her design.

On the first night of the representation of *LOVER'S VOWS*, she attended the Theatre, and felt much surprised at the extent of the Alterations and Omissions which had been made. She readily admitted that these Alterations might have been necessary to accommodate the Play to the taste of an English Audience. Still, however, as she was satisfied that the Piece had been divested of many of its principal Beauties, and that it did not reflect the Mind, the Principles, and the Genius of *Kotzebue*—she felt herself irresistibly prompted to present her favourite Author to the Public, in the Form he had chosen for

for himself; anxious that, as a Dramatic Writer he should be brought to a fair trial at the bar of criticism. She wished him to be exhibited in his own native garb, not, as he emphatically expresses himself, in his Preface, "in the borrowed Plumage of others." It has, therefore, been her desire, that the Public might be enabled to feel the Merits of the Author, and appreciate the value of the Alterations.

It will at once be candid and useful to enumerate the chief points of Variation between the Play, as represented, and in its original form,—

The most essential deviation respects the important comic character of the Count von der Mulde, or Cassel, which scarcely possesses a single feature of the original. As it stands here, the Reader will observe that it is an exquisitely finished and highly-wrought portrait of a German Coxcomb. Whether this character might have been relished by an English Audience the Translator will not pretend to decide; her own judgment

judgment, however, leads her to think that it would have had much more effect in its original, than in its altered state. Divested of all its marked features as a German Coxcomb, particularly of the French phrases so appropriate to that character, yet not wholly transformed into an English *Petit Maitre*, we scarcely understand among what description of persons he is intended to be classed. The Baron indeed calls him a complete *Monkey*, but the smart repartees put into his mouth, seem wholly inconsistent with the small talents bespoken by that appellation. This very appellation, however, is a deviation from the original, where he is called a Coxcomb; but perhaps this arose from a mistake of the Translator's, between *Laffen* (a Coxcomb) and *Affen* (an Ape). Moreover, from being one of the most prominent personages in the Play, and designed as a forcible contrast to the plain and grave, but elevated character of Frederick, he is now degraded into a subordinate state, which leaves the performance without a due share of comic interest, and the happy effect of the contrast is lost. The last scene between him and the Baron,

is



is made to bear too much resemblance to that where Frederick discovers himself to the Baron as his son, and consequently has a tendency to weaken the effect of the latter scene, which ought to have been preserved as the most impressive of the whole Play.

The Amelia in *LOVER'S VOWS*, so far from being the artless innocent child of Nature, drawn by Kotzebue, appears a forward country hoyden, who deviates in many instances from the established usages of society, and the decorums of her sex, in a manner wholly unwarranted by the original. The most amiable traits in her character are distorted and disguised, by a pertness which greatly detracts from the esteem which her benevolent conduct would inspire. Perhaps the latter may be better suited to representation, before an English Audience, but in the closet, the Amelia of Kotzebue must excite the stronger degree of interest.

To the alterations in the character of the Butler, the Translator can give her unqualified approbation. He appears as decidedly a gainer

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a gainer by the garb in which Mrs. Inchbald has equipped him, as the Count and Amelia are losers. This improvement, in some degree, atones for the loss of humorous effect in the character of the Count; the doggerel verses are most happily introduced, and the Translator is sensible that those given from the original Play, will, in comparison, appear insipid and defective in broad humour.

Some interesting scenes and exquisite touches of nature are omitted. This the Translator has reason to suspect arose from the imperfection of the Translation put into Mrs. Inchbald's hands.

In the fifth Scene of the first Act, the benevolence of the Country Girl is not sufficiently displayed, through the omission of the passage in which she gives some milk to the fainting Wilhelmina.

The sixth and seventh Scenes of the First Act, and the fifth Scene of the fourth Act, are wholly suppressed.

The fourth Scene in the fourth Act opens very abruptly, in consequence of the freedom with

with which the pruning-knife has been wielded by lopping off the first half. The rest of the omissions consist of occasional curtailments in her speeches and dialogue.

The Translation here given is from the genuine *Leipsick* Edition, published by the Author in 1791. Of the very great reputation which this Play has acquired upon the continent, some idea may be formed from the circumstance, that, prior to the appearance of that publication, no less than twelve spurious and imperfect Editions had been published at *Neuwied*, *Frankfort*, *Cologne*, and *Leipsick*.

ANNE PLUMPTRE.

*London, Oct. 15, 1798.*

**DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.**

*Performed by*

- BARON VON WILDELHEIN,**  
*a Colonel out of service,* - **Mr. MURRAY.**  
**AMELIA,** *his Daughter,* - **Mrs. H. JOHNSTON.**  
*The PASTOR of the Parish, in*  
*which lies the Baron's Estate,*  
*performed under the Name of*  
*of ARNAUD,* - - - **Mr. H. JOHNSTON.**  
**COUNT VON DER MULDE,**  
*performed under the Name of*  
**COUNT CASSEL,** - - - **Mr. KNIGHT.**  
**WILHELMINA BOETT-**  
**CHER,** *performed under the*  
*Name of AGATHA FRI-*  
*BOURG,* - - - - **Mrs. JOHNSTON.**  
**FREDERICK BOETTCHER,** *a*  
*young Soldier, performed un-*  
*der the Name of FREDE-*  
*RICK FRIBOURG,* - - - **Mr. POPE.**  
*A Cottager, performed under the*  
*Name of HUBERT,* - **Mr. POWEL.**  
**COTTAGER'S WIFE,** - - - **Mrs. DAVENPORT.**  
**CHRISTIAN,** *Butler in the*  
*Baron's Family,* - - - **Mr. MUNDEN.**  
**LANDLORD** *of the public house.*  
**A FARMER.**  
**A LABOURER.**  
**A YOUNG COUNTRY GIRL.**  
**A JEW.**  
**A HUNTSMAN.**  
**SERVANTS and HUNTSMEN.**



THE  
NATURAL SON;

OR,

LOVERS' VOWS.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *The Highway leading to a Town. The Road runs through a small Village, the last Houses of which are in Sight. A Public House on the Right.*

*Enter LANDLORD from the Public House, pulling WILHELMINA out by the Arms.*

LANDLORD.

NO staying here, woman, no staying here!—It is the fair to day in the village, and as the country people pass by with their wives and children, they'll be coming in, and I shall want every corner of my house.

*Wilhel.* Will you thrust a poor sick woman out of doors?

*Land.* I do not thrust you out?

*Wilhel.* Your unkindness breaks my heart.

*Land.* It is no such mighty hardship.

*Wilhel.* I have spent my last penny with you.

*Land.* You have—and because it was your last, you can stay here no longer.

*Wilhel.* I can work.

*Land.* Why you can scarcely move your hands.

*Wilhel.* My strength will return.

*Land.* Well, then you may return hither.

B

*Wilhel.*

*Wilhel.* But what will become of me in the mean time?

*Land.* It is fine weather—you may be any where.

*Wilhel.* Who will clothe me should this my only wretched garment be wet through with dew and rain?

*Land.* He who clothes the lilies of the field.

*Wilhel.* Who will give me a morsel of bread to appease my hunger?

*Land.* He who feeds the fowls of the air.

*Wilhel.* Hard-hearted man! thou knowest that I have fasted ever since yesterday morning.

*Land.* The sick can eat but little—eating is not good for them.

*Wilhel.* I will faithfully and honourably pay for every thing.

*Land.* By what means?—the times are hard.

*Wilhel.* My fate is also hard.

*Land.* I tell you what—here lies the highway; the road is full of passengers—beg a small matter of some pitiful heart.

*Wilhel.* Beg!—No—I will rather starve!

*Land.* That's the great lady indeed!—but many an honest woman has begged for all that. Only try, custom makes every thing easy.

(*WILHELMINA fits down on a stone under a tree.*)

*Land.* And here comes somebody—I'll teach you how to begin.

SCENE II. *Enter a Labourer with his implements, passing along the road.*

*Land.* (to the Peasant) Good day!

*Lab.* Good day!

*Land.* Neighbour Nicolas, won't you please to bestow a small matter upon a poor woman. (*The Labourer passes off.*) That won't do. The poor devil must work himself for his daily pay. But here comes our fat Farmer, who every Sunday puts some money into the poor's box; I'll lay a wager he gives you something.

SCENE

**SCENE III.** Enter a jolly looking FARMER, who walks on very slowly.

*Land.* Good day, Mr. Farmer! Fine weather! — Yonder sits a poor sick woman, who begs alms of you.  
*Farmer.* Is she not ashamed of herself? She is still young; she can work.

*Land.* She has had the fever.

*Farmer.* Aye, one may work one's fingers to the bones; one may toil hard—money is scarce enough now-a-days.

*Land.* Only bestow a small matter on her!—she is hungry.

*Farmer.* (as he passes on) The harvest has been very bad, and the distemper has carried off the best of my cattle.

*Land.* There's a miser for you, that does nothing but brood over his old dollars!—But talking of brooding, it comes into my head that my old hen hatches to-day—I must make haste and look after her.—(Goes into the house)

**SCENE IV.** WILHELMINA alone.—Her clothes wretched, her countenance bearing marks of Sickness and Sorrow, yet still retaining traces of Beauty.

*Wilhelmina.* O God! thou knowest that it was never thus with me while I had wherewithal to give!—Dearest God; thou who hast hitherto sheltered me from despair, accept my thanks. Oh that I could but work again! but this fever has so shaken me—did my Frederick know that his mother hungered!—Ah, lives he still, or does a weight of earth now cover him?—Ah, no, no!—God forbid! I exist only to see him once more.—Thou author of my woes, I will not curse thee; heaven suffer thee to prosper, if it can grant prosperity to the seducer of innocence!—Should chance conduct thee this way, shouldst thou, amid

these rags, beneath this sorrow-stricken form, recognize thy former blooming Wilhelmina—what must be thy feelings?—Ah, I hunger; had I but a morsel of bread, but patience; here on the highway I cannot long be suffered to wait.

**SCENE V.** *A young Country Girl enters carrying eggs and milk to market—she passes briskly on, but seeing WILHELMINA, stops and speaks.*

*Country Girl.* God preserve you.

*Wilhel.* I thank you kindly!—Ah, dearest child, hast thou not a morsel of bread to give to a poor woman?

*Country Girl.* (with looks of compassion.) Bread! no, indeed, I have not any. Are you hungry then?

*Wilhel.* Alas, I am.

*Country Girl.* Ah, dearest God!—and I have no money, and I have eaten the very last morsel of my breakfast.—But I will hasten to the town, sell my milk and eggs, and when I return I will give you a Dreyer\*. But, now I think of it, all that time you will still be hungry.—Will you drink a little of my milk?

*Wilhel.* O, yes! and thank you kindly, tender-hearted girl.

*Country Girl.* Well, drink! drink! (she holds the vessel up to her with much kindness) Won't you have any more?—drink again if you like, you are heartily welcome.

*Wilhel.* Heaven reward you!—you have quite revived me.

*Country Girl.* I am heartily glad of it; (gives her a friendly nod) good day, mother! God protect you!

[Exit singing.]

*Wilhel.* (looking after her) Such once was I—like her, brisk and joyous, and awake to pity.

\* About a halfpenny English.

SCENE



SCENE VI. *Enter a HUNTSMAN, with his Gun and Dogs.*

*Wilhelmina.* Good Sport to you honest man!

*Huntsman.* (as he passes on) Damnation! must I be crossed on my way by an old woman at my first setting out!—I shall have no luck to-day. The devil fetch you, you old witch. *[Exit.*

*Wilhel.* That fellow varnishes over the hardness of his heart by his superstition.—But here comes another—a Jew—Ah, if I could beg—of him would I ask relief, for Christians do but profess humanity.

SCENE VII. *Enter a JEW, who is about to pass on, but seeing WILHELMINA, stops and examines her countenance.*

*Wilhelmina.* God bless you!

*Jew.* A thousand thanks, poor woman!—you seem very ill.

*Wilhel.* I have a fever.

*Jew.* (feeling hastily in his pocket, whence he takes out a small purse, and gives her some money.) Here, take this, 'tis all I can spare, I have not much myself. *[Exit.*

*Wilhel.* (much affected calls after him)—A thousand thanks! a thousand thanks!—Was I wrong? Did my expectation deceive me?—the creed has no influence upon the heart.

SCENE VIII. *FREDERICK enters with his Knapsack at his Back, walks briskly on, humming a tune: as he approaches, he observes the Sign of the Public House, and stops.*

*Frederick.* Humph!—to drink!—it is very hot to-day.—but let me first examine my purse.—(takes out some pieces of money, which he contemplates as he holds them in his hand). Yes, to be sure there will be enough to pay for a breakfast and a dinner, and by evening, please God, I hope to be at home. Come,

then, I am very thirsty—Holla, Landlord! (*he sees Wilhelmina*) But what have we here? a poor sick woman, pining, consuming away—she does not beg, but her situation asks assistance, and should we always wait to give till we are entreated?—fye! fye!—we must forego the drinking, else shall we have nothing left for dinner; be it so!—To perform a good action satisfies both hunger and thirst.—There! (*goes to her with a view to give her the money, which he was holding between his fingers to pay for his liquor.*)

*Wilhel.* (*looks at him steadfastly, then gives a loud shriek*) Frederick!

*Fred.* (*Starts, gazes at her earnestly, throws away his money, knapsack, hat, stick, whatever encumbers him, and falls into her arms*) Mother!!! (*both remain speechless some time—Frederick first recovers himself and proceeds*)—Mother! Good heavens! to find you in this state!—Mother!—what is the matter!—speak!

*Wilhel.* (*trembling*) I cannot—speak—dear son!—dear Frederick!

*Fred.* Recover yourself, dear, dear mother! (*he rests her head upon his breast*) Recover yourself! how you tremble!—you are fainting.

*Wilhel.* I am so weak—my head is so giddy—the whole of yesterday I had nothing to eat!

*Fred.* (*Starting up, wildly, and covering his face with both hands*) Ah, my God! (*he runs to his knapsack, tears it open, and takes out a piece of bread*) here is bread! (*collects together the money which he had thrown away, and adds to it what remained in his pocket*) here is my little store of money, and my coat, my cloak, my arms, I'll sell them all. Ah, mother, mother,—Holla, Landlord! (*knocks hastily at the public house*).

*Landlord.* (*looking out at the window*) What's the matter?

*Fred.* A bottle of wine here!—quick!—dispatch!

*Land.*

**Land.** A bottle of wine!

**Fred.** Yes, yes!

**Land.** And for whom?

**Fred.** For me!—the devil!—make haste!

**Land.** Well, well!—but, Mr. Soldier, can you pay for it?

**Fred.** Here is money!—but make haste, or I'll break every window in your house.

**Land.** Patience, patience! *(he shuts the window.)*

**Fred.** *(to his mother)* Fasted the whole day!—fasted!—and I had wherewithal to eat!—I had meat and wine served up to me yesterday evening at the inn, while my mother hungered!—Oh, God! how is all my promised joy embittered!

**Wilhel.** Be comforted, dear Frederick!—I see thee again—I am now well—I have been very ill—I scarcely hoped ever to see thee more.

**Fred.** Ill! and I was not with you!—Well, never will I leave you more.—See, I am become tall, and strong, I will work for your support.

*Enter LANDLORD with a bottle and glass.*

**Land.** There is wine—of precious growth; a glorious bottle; 'tis only Franconian wine to be sure, but it is sour enough to pass for good old Rhenish.

**Fred.** Bring it hither!—What does the trash cost?

**Land.** Trash! call one of the most precious gifts of heaven trash! good friend, my wine is no trash; I have besides another delicious French wine in my cellar, ay, you ought to taste that, so rich, so luscious, when you have emptied the glass it looks dyed all over such a fine red. *(Frederick impatiently attempts to snatch the bottle from him)* Come, come, I must have the money first! this bottle costs half a guilder\*.

**Fred.** *(Gives him all his money)* There! there! *(pours out some for his mother, who drinks, and eats a piece of bread with it.)*

**Land.**

\* About thirteen pence English.



*Land.* (*counting over the money*) It is one dreyer short, but however one ought to be compassionate.—To revive a poor sick woman, one may overlook such a thing; but take care of the bottle, and do not break the glass, there's a fine German verse engraved upon it. *[Exit.]*

*Wilhel.* I thank thee kindly, dearest Frederick, wine is reviving, and wine, *from the hands of a son,* gives new life.

*Fred.* Don't exhaust yourself by talking, mother; recover yourself.

*Wilhel.* Tell me then how has it fared with you for these last five years?

*Fred.* Good and ill jumbled together; one day 'twas all plenty, the next nothing at all.

*Wilhel.* 'Tis a long time since you have written to me.

*Fred.* Ah dearest mother, 'tis a hard matter for a poor soldier to afford the money for postage, only think of the distance—it takes half a year's pay, and you know one must live. And then I always thought within myself, my mother is strong and healthy, and I am strong and healthy, I may as well wait a few weeks longer; and so I delayed it from one week to another.—But I hope you'll forgive me, dearest mother.

*Wilhel.* We easily forgive neglect when the anxiety it occasions is no longer felt. Have you then obtained your discharge?

*Fred.* No. I have only procured leave of absence for a few months for a particular reason; but you want me—I will continue with you.

*Wilhel.* There is no occasion, dear Frederick,—your visit will restore my health, and renew my vigour, then shall I be able again to work, and you may return to your regiment; I would not be a hindrance to your fortune. But it seems you have obtained leave of absence for a *particular reason*—Did you not say so?—may I know this reason?

*Fred.*



*Fred.* O yes, dear mother!—listen, and I will relate it.—When I left you five years ago, you equipped me excellently with clothes, and linen, and money,—but one trifle you forgot,—the certificate of my birth. I was at that time a giddy, thoughtless lad of fifteen, and this never occurred to me, but it has since occasioned me much vexation. Many times have I been heartily weary of a soldier's bustling life, and was desirous of obtaining my discharge, that I might apply myself to learn some reputable trade, but whenever I mentioned this subject to any tradesman, saying, "Good Sir, I wish to bind myself to you to learn your trade," the first question always was, "where's the certificate of your birth?" That settled the point at once. I was vexed and continued a soldier, for in that profession they only ask, whether all is right about the heart; the certificate of birth is of no more account than the diploma of nobility. But still this brought me into many unpleasant scrapes. My comrades found this out, and if any of them wished to teize me, or were intoxicated, they would sneer at me, and make ill-natured speeches, and endeavour to irritate me. Twice I was even compelled to fight, and was put under arrest. My captain frequently admonished me—and at last about five weeks ago, when another of these quarrels happened, he called me to him in his own room—(Oh mother, my captain is a fine charming man)—"Boettcher," said he, "I am sorry to learn, that you are continually getting into quarrels and incurring punishment, for in other respects I am extremely satisfied with your service, and have a good opinion of you. The serjeant has informed me of the cause. I'll tell you what—write home and desire that your certificate may be sent; or if you are inclined to go and fetch it yourself. I will give you leave of absence for a few months,—the time of exercising is over"—Oh, mother, your form hovered before my eyes, as he spoke so kindly. I  
kissed

kissed his hand, and stammered out my thanks. He presented me with a dollar,—“Go, my lad,” said he, “may your journey be prosperous, and remember to return at the proper time.”—Now, mother, you see I am here, and this is the whole of the story.

*Wilhel.* (who had listened to his narrative with embarrassment.) And you are come hither, dear Frederick, to fetch the certificate of your birth?

*Fred.* Yes.

*Wilhel.* Oh heavens!

*Fred.* What is the matter? (*Wilhelmina bursts into tears*) for God’s sake, what is the matter?

*Wilhel.* Alas, there is no such certificate!

*Fred.* How?

*Wilhel.* Thou art—a—NATURAL SON—

*Fred.* Indeed—and who then is my father?

*Wilhel.* Ah! the wildness of your looks tortures me!

*Fred.* (recovering himself, and speaking mildly and affectionately.) Be not alarmed, dearest mother!—Still I am your son—tell me only who is my father?

*Wilhel.* When you left me five years ago, you were too young to be entrusted with such a secret. Now your maturer years demand my confidence. You are grown to man’s estate, and are moreover worthy the name of man. My fair maternal hopes have not deceived me. Ah, I have heard full often, how consolatory, how reviving it is to the spirits of the afflicted to meet with one to whom their wrongs may be imparted. The tears which your sufferings draw from the eyes of another, assuage the anguish of your own. Thanks, thanks be to God, the hour is arrived, in which I can enjoy this consolation: my son is my confidant, be he also my judge, for a strict judge I must deprecate, but my son will not be severe on me.—

*Fred.* Speak, dearest mother! lay open your whole heart.

*Wilhel.*

*Wilhel.* Ah, my son, I will tell you all; and yet shame almost chains my tongue: do not then look at me.

*Fred.* Know I not well the heart of my mother! accursed be the thought that would condemn her for a weakness—of a crime she is incapable.

*Wilhel.* Yon village, the spire of whose church you see at a distance, is the place of my birth: In that church was I baptized, and there also was I instructed in the first rudiments of our faith. My parents were pious and good cottagers; poor, but honest. When I was fourteen years old I chanced one day to be seen by the lady of the castle: I pleased her, she took me to her mansion, and delighted in forming my rustic mind. She put good books into my hands: I was instructed in French and music; my ideas and capacities developed themselves, but so also did my vanity: Yes, under the appearance of reserve, I became a vain silly girl. I had just attained my seventeenth year, when the son of my benefactress, who was in the Saxon service, obtained leave of absence, and came to visit us; it was the first time of my seeing him; he was a handsome and seductive youth;—he talked to me of love, of marriage;—he was the first man who had paid homage to my charms: Ah, Frederick, do not look at me, I cannot go on.

*Fred.* (*casts down his eyes, and presses her hand to his heart—both pause*)

*Wilhel.* I, too credulous creature, was beguiled of my innocence! he feigned the most ardent love—promised me marriage after the death of his aged mother—swore eternal faith and constancy. Alas! and I forgot my pious parents, the precepts of our worthy pastor, the kindness of my foster-mother—Ah Frederick, Frederick, often as I cast my eyes towards the tower of yonder church, so often does the figure of our good old pastor with his silver hairs seem to stand before my eyes, as he appeared when for the first time I went to confession.



son.—How did my young heart then flutter—how full was I of virtue and elevated devotion—Oh, at that time, certain of triumph, I had courage frankly to acknowledge every failing.—How, oh Heavens! how could it be possible, that a wild, unthinking youth, should, by a few idle words and glances, efface that deep, deep impression! yet so it was—I became pregnant.—We were both awakened from our sweet intoxication, and shuddered at the fearful prospect of the future. I had put everything to the hazard—he only had to fear the anger of his mother, a good, but inexorably strict woman. How tenderly did he conjure me, how affectingly did he entreat of me, not to betray him!—How seducingly, how ardently did he promise hereafter to make me amends for all—and so dearly did I love him, that I gave him my word, to conceal the name of my seducer,—to bury his image in my heart, and patiently to endure, for his sake, whatever sorrow might be in store for me.—Alas, 'tis much indeed that I have suffered!—He departed, satisfied—meanwhile the time of my delivery approached—I could no longer conceal my situation—Ah, I was severely dealt with for persisting in my refusal to name the father of my child.—I was driven indignantly from the house, and when I came to the door of my afflicted parents, there too was I denied admittance. My father upbraided me bitterly, and even was about to curse me, when my mother tore him nastily away. She soon returned—threw me a crooked dollar, which she wore about her neck, and wept; since that time I never have seen them. But the dollar I have still *(she shows it)* I have suffered hunger rather than part with this! *(she gazes on it some time, kisses it, and re-oves it to its place.)* Without a house in which to hide my head, without money, without friends, I wandered a whole night in the open fields. Once I had arrived at the river side, there where stands the mill, and sorely was I tempted to throw myself in under the mill-



mill-wheel, thus at once to end my misery. But immediately the image of the worthy Pastor presented itself before me with his gentle, venerable mein—I started back, and looked around me to see whether he were not behind me—The thought of him, and of his precepts, awakened my confidence—morning came on, I resolved to go to his house. He received me affectionately, uttered not a single reproach—"What is done," he said, "is done! Heaven pardons the penitent—reform then, my daughter, and all may yet be well. Here in this village, however, thou must not remain; that will be to thee a continued mortification, and a scandal to my parishioners—but"—and here he put a piece of gold into my hand, together with a letter which he had written in my behalf,—"go to the town, my daughter, seek out an old and respectable widow, to whom this letter is directed, with her thou wilt be safe, and she will besides give thee instruction in what manner to obtain an honest livelihood."—With these words he laid his hand upon my forehead, and giving me his blessing, promised also to endeavour to soften my father.—Ah, I seemed now to receive new life!—On my way to the town I reconciled myself with my Creator, and solemnly vowed never again to deviate from the path of virtue—that vow I have strictly kept, so far may you still respect me, my Frederick. (*Frederick presses her silently in his arms, after a pause she proceeds*) Your birth was the cause of much sorrow, and much joy—Twice did I write to your father, but God only knows whether he received the letters, no answer have I ever obtained.

*Fred. (Hastily)* No answer!

*Wilhel.* Be calm! my son, be calm!—It was in time of war, his regiment was then in the service,—all was bustle and confusion throughout the whole country,—the troops of three different powers pursued each other alternately; how easily then might letters be lost; No, he certainly never

son.—How did my young heart then flutter—how full was I of virtue and elevated devotion—Oh, at that time, certain of triumph, I had courage frankly to acknowledge every failing.—How, oh Heavens! how could it be possible, that a wild, unthinking youth, should, by a few idle words and glances, efface that deep, deep impression! yet so it was—I became pregnant.—We were both awakened from our sweet intoxication, and shuddered at the fearful prospect of the future. I had put everything to the hazard—he only had to fear the anger of his mother, a good, but inexorably strict woman. How tenderly did he conjure me, how affectingly did he entreat of me, not to betray him!—How seducingly, how ardently did he promise hereafter to make me amends for all—and so dearly did I love him, that I gave him my word, to conceal the name of my seducer,—to bury his image in my heart, and patiently to endure, for his sake, whatever sorrow might be in store for me.—Alas, 'tis much indeed that I have suffered!—He departed, satisfied—meanwhile the time of my delivery approached—I could no longer conceal my situation—Ah, I was severely dealt with for persisting in my refusal to name the father of my child.—I was driven indignantly from the house, and when I came to the door of my afflicted parents, there too was I denied admittance. My father upbraided me bitterly, and even was about to curse me, when my mother tore him hastily away. She soon returned—threw me a crooked dollar, which she wore about her neck, and wept; since that time I never have seen them. But the dollar I have still *(she shows it)* I have suffered hunger rather than part with this! *(she gazes on it some time, kisses it, and re-oves it to its place.)* Without a house in which to hide my head, without money, without friends, I wandered a whole night in the open fields. Once I had arrived at the river side, there where stands the mill, and sorely was I tempted to throw myself in under the mill-

mill-wheel, thus at once to end my misery. But immediately the image of the worthy Pastor presented itself before me with his gentle, venerable mein—I started back, and looked around me to see whether he were not behind me—The thought of him, and of his precepts, awakened my confidence—morning came on, I resolved to go to his house. He received me affectionately, uttered not a single reproach—"What is done," he said, "is done! Heaven pardons the penitent—reform then, my daughter, and all may yet be well. Here in this village, however, thou must not remain; that will be to thee a continued mortification, and a scandal to my parishioners—but"—and here he put a piece of gold into my hand, together with a letter which he had written in my behalf,—“go to the town, my daughter, seek out an old and respectable widow, to whom this letter is directed, with her thou wilt be safe, and she will besides give thee instruction in what manner to obtain an honest livelihood.”—With these words he laid his hand upon my forehead, and giving me his blessing, promised also to endeavour to soften my father.—Ah, I seemed now to receive new life!—On my way to the town I reconciled myself with my Creator, and solemnly vowed never again to deviate from the path of virtue—that vow I have strictly kept, so far may you still respect me, my Frederick. (*Frederick presses her silently in his arms, after a pause she proceeds*) Your birth was the cause of much sorrow, and much joy—Twice did I write to your father, but God only knows whether he received the letters, no answer have I ever obtained.

*Fred. (Hastily)* No answer!

*Wilhel.* Be calm! my son, be calm!—It was in time of war, his regiment was then in the service,—all was bustle and confusion throughout the whole country,—the troops of three different powers pursued each other alternately; how easily then might letters be lost; No, he certainly never



received mine, for he was no villain. Since then indeed, I have never troubled him; it might be pride, or call it what you please, but I thought that if he had not forgotten me, he would certainly seek information concerning me,—learn from our pastor whither I was retired, and come to see me, but alas, he came not, and some years after I even heard *(she sighs deeply)*—that he was married. Thus was I compelled to bid farewell to my last ray of hope; in silence and solitude I inhabited an indigent cottage, where I gained a livelihood by the work of my hands, and by instructing the neighbouring children in what I had learnt at the castle. You, my dearest Frederick, were my only joy; and on your education I bestowed all that I could spare from the necessaries of food and cloathing. My diligence was not ill repaid; you were a good boy; only your wildness, your youthful fire, your love for a soldier's life, and desire to ramble about the world, occasioned me many a heart-ache: at last I thought it must be as God pleases! Is it the boy's destination? I will not hinder him, though my heart should break at the separation. Five years ago therefore, I suffered you to depart, giving you at that time, all that I could possibly spare, perhaps more than I ought to have spared, but then I was in health, and when that is the case, one is too apt to think one shall never be sick. Indeed had I continued well, I had earnt still much more than I wanted for myself, had been a rich woman for one in my situation, and still, dear Frederick, had sent you every year a Christmas present. But I was attacked by a lingering sickness—there ended my earnings—my little store scarcely sufficed for physician, nurse and medicines, and I was obliged a few days ago, to turn my back upon my poor little cottage, as I had no longer wherewithal to pay the rent. My only resource was to totter along the road with this stick, this bag, and these rags,  
and



and solicit a morsel of bread from the charity of those who happened to pass by.

*Fred.* Ah, if your Frederick had suspected this, how bitter would have been every morsel he eat, every drop that he drank. Well, God be thanked! I am here again, you are alive, and I will remain with you; I will not on any account leave you; and I will write thus to my Captain. Let him take it as he will, let him revile it as desertion, I will not stir from my mother. Alas! however, I have not learnt any art, any trade, but I have a pair of nervous arms, I can guide the plough, I can handle the flail; I will hire myself as a day-labourer, and at night copy writings for some lawyer; for thanks to you, my good mother, I write a fair and legible hand. Oh, all will go well! God will help us, for he supports those who honor their parents.

*Wilhel.* (*clasps him in her arms much affected*) What princess could offer me an equivalent for such son?

*Fred.* One thing you have still forgotten, mother—What is my father's name?

*Wilhel.* Baron-Wildenhain.

*Fred.* And he lives on this estate?

*Wilhel.* There once lived his mother, but she is dead. He himself married a noble heiress in Franconia, and as I am assured, has, to please her, for ever forsaken his native country. Here in the mean time lives a Steward who manages the estate at his pleasure.

*Fred.* I will hasten to the Baron my father, boldly face him, and bear you upon my back to him. How great is the distance of Franconia? from twenty to thirty miles\*: only so far has he removed himself, and has he escaped from his conscience at so short a distance? Truly, a lazy creeping kind of a conscience, twenty years has

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it

\* A German mile is equal to about five English.

it been crawling after him, and not yet overtaken him!—Oh, fye, fye!—Wherefore must I know my father, when my father is not an honest man? My heart was satisfied with a mother, a mother who has taught me to love, and why should I know a father who will teach me to hate?—No, I will not seek him!—Let him remain where he is, and feast and pamper himself till his last hour, and then he may see how he has prepared himself to meet his God. Is it not true, mother, that we need him not? We will—but what is the matter? your countenance is changed!—Mother, what is the matter?

*Wilhel.* (*very weak and almost fainting*) Nothing! nothing!—my joy!—too much talking!—I wish to be quiet a while.

*Fred.* My God! I never till now perceived that we were in the highway! (*he knocks at the door of the public house*) Hallo! Landlord!

*Land.* (*at the window*) Well, what is the matter now?

*Fred.* Here, I want a bed in an instant for this poor woman.

*Land.* A bed for this poor woman! (*sneeringly*) Ha, ha, ha!—Last night she lay in the stall with my cattle, and has bewitched them all! (*shuts the window,*)

*Fred.* (*taking up a stone in a rage*) Cursed scoundrel! (*he looks at his mother and drops the stone again*) Ah, my poor mother! (*he knocks in despairing anguish at a cottage door which stands further in the back ground*) Hallo! halloo!

SCENE IX. *Enter a COTTAGER from the House.*

*Cottager.* God preserve you!—What do you want?

*Frederick.* Good friend look at this poor woman, she is fainting here in the open air. She is

is my mother. Do pray let her have a corner in your house, where she may rest for half and hour. I beg it for God's sake, and heaven will reward you.

*Cot.* Hold your tongue, I entreat!—I understand you perfectly well (*speaking to somebody in the house*) Bet, make up the bed there, quickly; you can lay the boy upon the bench in the mean time: (*to Frederick*) Don't tell me a long story again about God rewarding, and heaven ptying; if God is to pay all such trifles, he'll have enough to do indeed. Come, quick, support her, let us lead her in gently. A bed, as good as I can give her, she shall have; but indeed she will not find much in my house besides. (*They lead her into the cottage*)

## A C T II.

SCENE I. *A Room in the Cottage.*

WILHELMINA, FREDERICK, *the Cottager and his Wife.*

WILHELMINA *sits on a wooden Stool, with her Head supported on her Son's Breast.*

FREDERICK *(speaking to the Cottager and Wife, as they are busied about the Cottage.)*

FREDERICK.

DEAR good people, have you nothing then? Nothing strengthening? nothing reviving?

*Wife.* Run, husband, to our neighbour at the at the public house, and fetch a bottle of wine.

*Fred.* Ah, that will not do! his wine is as bad as his heart. She has already tried that, and I fear it has proved poison to her.

*Cottager.* Go and see, wife, whether the black hen has not laid an egg. A new laid egg, boiled soft——

*Wife.* Or a few ripe currants——

*Cottager.* Or the best thing that I have——a piece of bacon.

*Wife.* Or there's about half a pint of brandy standing in the dairy.

*Fred. (much affected)* God bless you and reward you for your kind-heartedness!—Do you hear, mother? (*Wilhelmina nods her head*)—Do you like any of these things? (*Wilhelmina makes a motion with*



*with her hand declining them*) She does not fancy them—is there no physician in the neighbourhood?

*Cottager.* There's a hoese doctor lives in the village—but I never in my life saw any other.

*Fred.* Oh God, what shall I do!—she will die in my arms—merciful God, take pity on me—Kind people pray for us—pray, I entreat you! I cannot pray myself.

*Wilhel.* *(with a broken voice)* Be comforted dear Frederick—I am well—I am only faint, very faint—a glass of good wine—

*Fred.* Yes, mother! immediately mother—directly! But, O God, where shall I procure it!—no money—none, not a doit.

*Wife.* Look you here, husband—did you carry the money for the rent yesterday to the steward?

*Cottager.* Yes, indeed, the more's the pity. What can be done!—It is true, as I am an honest man, that I have not a single doit in the house.

*Fred.* I will—I will beg—and if they will not give me—I will rob!—Good people take care of my poor mother—do what you are able!—give her what help you can!—I will soon return.  
*(Rushes out of the house)*

SCENE II. WILHELMINA, the Cottager, and his Wife.

*Cottager.* Should he but step to our pastor, he'll give something for certain.

*Wilhel.* Does the worthy pastor then still live?

*Wife.* Alas, no!—The good old gentleman!—it has pleased God to take him—he died two years ago, worn out and weary of life.

*Cottager.* He went out like a lamp.

*Wife.*

*Wife.* (wiping her eyes) We have reason enough to weep for him.

*Cottager.* (with tears also) He was our father.

*Wilhel.* (extremely affected) Our father!

*Wife.* We shall never have such another.

*Cottager.* Well, well, let every man have his deserts—we must not disparage any body. Our present pastor is also a worthy good man.

*Wife.* Yes, indeed, husband—but very young.

*Cottager.* 'Tis true, one can't look up to him with quite so much respect—our hearts don't take to him so readily—but our old pastor himself, you know, was once young.

*Wife.* (to *Wilhelmina*) This gentleman was tutor in the family, and my lord the Baron was so well satisfied with him, that he made him our pastor.

*Cottager.* And well he might be satisfied: for to be sure our young lady, God bless her, is a charming affable creature.

*Wife.* Not at all proud. When she comes to church, she nods her head round to all the countrywomen, first to one and then to another.

*Cottager.* And when she comes into the pew, she holds her fan before her face, and prays with such devotion!

*Wife.* And during the sermon, she never once turns away her eyes from the pastor.

*Wilhel.* (with emotion) And who is this young lady?

*Cottager.* The daughter of my lord the Baron.

*Wilhel.* Is she here then?

*Wife.* Here!—yes, to be sure!—did not you know that?—Next Friday it will be five weeks since his lordship made his entry into the Castle, bag and baggage.

*Wilhel.* Baron Wildenhain?

*Wife.* Yes, my lord himself.

*Wilhel.* And his lady?

*Cottager.* Oh, no; her ladyship is dead. They lived some hundred miles off, in Franconia; and while

while her ladyship was alive, my lord never came amongst us. That has frequently been a great loss to us. (*Speaking in a sort of whisper.*) She was a proud kind of lady, with a heap of fancies. Well, well, we should not speak ill of the dead. The Baron is still a very good kind of gentleman;—scarcely had my lady closed her eyes, when he resolved immediately to leave the place, and returned to Wildenhain. And well he might, for this is his native place;—here he grew up to manhood; many a time has he joined in our rural sports, and has often danced with my wife on a Sunday-evening under the lime trees.—Don't you remember it, Bet?

*Wife.* O yes, to be sure, I may well remember it. The young gentleman used to wear a red coat, and fine buckles set with sparkling stones.

*Cottager.* Afterwards, indeed, when he became an officer, he turned out rather wild; but young folks must sow their wild oars; the soil was naturally good, but the richest earth, you know, will sometimes bear weeds.

*Wife.* But do you remember, husband, what a piece of work he made with Boettcher's Minny?—That was not good.

*Cottager.* Hush, wife! we must not bring up such old stories. Besides, we don't know that he was the father of her child; she never said so.

*Wife.* Well, for all that, I'd lay my Sunday gown and laced cap that he was the man, and nobody else.—No, no, husband, you must not defend that—that was wicked. Who knows whether the poor creature has not died of hunger and grief—and her poor father, old Boettcher, he might have lived longer, if he had not been so heart-broken about it.

(*Wilhelmina faints*)

*Cottager.* (*first perceiving her*) Bet! Bet!—Help! Zounds, Help!

*Wife.* Ah! my God!—poor woman!

*Cottager.*

*Cottager.* Quick, quick, carry her into the chamber; lay her on the bed—and then we'll go and fetch the pastor, for she scarcely can live till morning. [*They carry her in.*]

SCENE III. *A Room in the Baron's Castle.*

*The Tea table is set out, a lighted Candle and a Roll of Wax taper on the table.*

*The BARON enters in his night-gown.*

*Baron.* Sleeps the Count still?

*Servant.* No, my lord; his hair is already dressed.

*Baron.* I suspected so; the whole house is scented with *poudre à la Marechalle*. Call my daughter hither. (*The servant goes out, the Baron fills his pipe, and lights it.*)—It seems to me that the old privy counsellor has saddled me with a complete coxcomb; whatever he says and does, is as silly and conceited as his countenance.—No, I will not be precipitate—my Amelia is too dear to me for that;—I must first know the young gentleman a little better, and not for the sake of an ancient friendship make my daughter unhappy. The poor girl innocently says yes, and she will do as her father pleases, and he understands these things better than herself. Pith, pity indeed, that the girl was not a boy!—Pity that the name of Wildenhain must be extinct, even as the flame which I now blow out—(*He blows out the candle with which he had lighted his pipe*)—All my fine estate, my glorious prospects, my honest, well conditioned tenants,—all, all must pass into foreign hands!—'tis to be regretted—much to be regretted!

SCENE



SCENE IV. Enter AMELIA in a loose morning dress.

*Amelia.* (*kissing the Baron's hand*) Good morrow, dear father.

*Baron.* Good morrow, my daughter. You have slept well, I hope?

*Amelia.* Oh! Yes.

*Baron.* You have, indeed, slept well? Not been at all disturbed?

*Amelia.* No—only the gnats made rather a humming in my ears.

*Baron.* The gnats! Well, that does not much signify. We must only smoke a bough of juniper in the room. 'Tis easier to drive away gnats than maggots.

*Amelia.* If you want to strive them away, 'tis only to boil some peas with a little quicksilver, and that will kill them.

*Baron.* (*laughing*) Well, well, it will be happy for you, Amelia, if you never know any other maggots than what a plate of peas will kill.

*Amelia.* Oh, you mean maggots in the head! No, no, I have none of them.

*Baron.* So much the better. What, indeed, should a young, lively girl of sixteen like you, have to do with maggots in her head. You have a father who loves you tenderly, and a suitor who begs permission to love you. How do you like the Count von der Mulde?

*Amelia.* Very well.

*Baron.* Do you not blush when I name him?

*Amelia.* (*feeling her cheeks*) No.

*Baron.* No!—Humph!—And you have not dreamt of him?

*Amelia.* No.

*Baron.* You did not dream at all, perhaps?

*Amelia.* (*considering*) Oh! yes, I dreamt of our pastor.

*Baron.* Aha! as he stood before you, and asked you for the ring?

*Amelia.*

*Amelia.* Oh, no! not so—I dreamt that we were still in Franconia, and he was still my tutor, and about to depart, and that I wept bitterly.

*Baron.* And that your father laughed, and your mother scolded?—Is it not true?—Yes, yes, it was a foolish scene.—It is still perfectly in my remembrance.

*Amelia.* And when I waked, my eyes were really wet.

*Baron.* Hear me, Amelia! When you dream again of the pastor, let it be that he stood at the altar, and you and the Count stood before him, and exchanged rings\*. What think you of that?

*Amelia.* I will most certainly, dear father, if you command it.

*Baron.* The devil!—No, I do not *command* it!—but I wish to know whether you love him? You know you saw him at the ball, when we spent a few days in town last winter.

*Amelia.* Should I then love every body whom I see at a ball?

*Baron.* Amelia! Amelia! Do not be stupid!—I mean, that at that time the Count von der Mulde simpered and ogled with you, danced an elegant minuet or two with you, poured *cau de mille fleurs* upon your pocket handkerchief, and God knows what he was talking about all the time.

*Amelia.* God knows, indeed!—I'm sure I remember nothing about it.

*Baron.* Nothing?

*Amelia.* If it would be any satisfaction to you I will endeavour to recollect as much as I can.

*Baron.* No, no, there is no occasion. What one is forced to *try* to recollect, can only be brought forth from a corner of the memory, not from the recesses of the heart. You do not then love him?

*Amelia.* I believe not.

*Baron.*

\* In Germany it is the practice for the bride and bridegroom to exchange rings.—Translator.

*Baron. (aside)* I believe not too.—Yet I wish to make you understand the connection between his visit and my questions. His father is a privy counsellor—a man of wealth and rank—of wealth and rank! dost thou hear?

*Amelia.* Yes, dear father—if you command it. But our pastor always told me that I should not regard such things; that wealth and rank are mere gifts of chance.

*Baron.* Well, well, he is right enough in that. But if it so happens that wealth and rank go hand in hand with merit, then they are an advantage. You understand me?

*Amelia.* Perfectly. *(with simplicity, and without any apparent design.)* And is that the case with the Count von der Mulde?

*Baron (embarrassed).* Humph!—His father has rendered the State important services;—he is my old friend—he was my tutor with your mother, and I have great obligations to him;—and because he so earnestly wishes for a marriage between you and his son—and because he supposes that in time you will love the young man so ardently—

*Amelia.* Does he suppose that?

*Baron.* Yes. But it appears not to me that you are of the same opinion.

*Amelia.* Not entirely. Still, if you command, dear father—

*Baron.* The devil!—I tell you that one must not command in such things;—a marriage without love is absolute slavery;—none but congenial minds should be united—I would not pair a nightingale with a finch. If you like each other, be it so—if not, here let the matter rest. *(More calmly)* Attend, my Amelia!—the whole of the affair is this—can you, or can you not, love this man? If you cannot, then we must send him back with a refusal.

*Amelia.* Dear father, it appears to me that I never shall love him. I have read so much in romances,

mances about love, how strange and wonderful are its effects—

*Baron.* Hey! what! Don't prattle to me of your romances! they are the devil, indeed!—they tell you a parcel of nonsense, that never can stand the test of experience. But stop!—I will put a few questions to you—answer them with sincerity, Amelia, —with strict sincerity.

*Amelia.* I have never answered you otherwise.

*Baron.* Are you pleased when you hear people talk of the Count?

*Amelia.* Good or ill?

*Baron.* Good, good?

*Amelia.* Oh, yes. I am always pleased when I hear good of any man.

*Baron.* But are you not elated when you hear him mentioned? *(She shakes her head.)* Are you not embarrassed? *(She shakes her head.)* Do you not wish sometimes that he should be made the subject of conversation, yet have not courage to begin talking of him yourself? *(She shakes her hand.)* Would you not defend him, if you should hear any one find fault with him?

*Amelia.* Oh, certainly, if I can. Our pastor—

*Baron.* Pshaw! Pshaw! we won't talk about our pastor at present.—How do you feel when you see the Count?

*Amelia.* Very well.

*Baron.* Don't you feel any palpitation as he approaches you?

*Amelia.* No! *(hastily recollecting herself)* Yes, I did once.

*Baron.* Aha!—now it's coming out.

*Amelia.* It was at the ball, when he trod on my foot.

*Baron.* Don't be foolish, Amelia!—Don't you cast down your eyes when he addresses you?

*Amelia.* I never cast down my eyes before any body.

*Baron.* Do you not play with your apron or handkerchief, when he is talking to you?

*Amelia.*



*Amelia.* No.

*Baron.* Does not your face glow when he makes you a fine speech, referring perhaps to love or marriage?

*Amelia.* Did he ever say any thing of that kind to me? it's more than I recollect.

*Baron.* Humph! humph!—(After a pause.) Have you not sometimes yawned while he was talking to you?

*Amelia.* No, dear father—that is not polite.

*Baron.* But were you ever disposed to yawn?

*Amelia.* Oh yes, dear father.

*Baron.* So!—then there is little hope.—Do you think him handsome?

*Amelia.* I don't know.

*Baron.* Do you not know what beauty is?—or do you not know whether you think him handsome?

*Amelia.* I never particularly examined him.

*Baron.* Bad again.—How did you feel when he came yesterday evening?

*Amelia.* I was vexed—for at the very time the servant so unseasonably called me, I was walking with our pastor on the little romantic hill.

*Baron.* Unseasonably!—Humph!—Well, only one more question.—Have you not designedly dressed your hair this morning with unusual care, and selected a becoming dishabille?

*Amelia.* (Surveying herself.) This is not dirty yet, dear father; I only wore it yesterday and the day before.

*Baron.* (aside.) Here's little prospect of success! Well, my dear child, the Count, then is indifferent to you?

*Amelia.* Why not, unless you command it.

*Baron.* (warmly.) Listen to me, Amelia!—If you repeat again your damned command, I may be tempted perhaps to command indeed. (More mildly.) To see you happy, my child, is my earnest wish, and commands cannot produce happiness. Marriage is a very inharmonious duet, if

the tones are ill assorted; therefore the great Composer has planted in our hearts the pure harmony of love. I'll tell you what, Amelia, I will send the pastor to you.

*Amelia.* (joyfully) The pastor!

*Baron.* He shall instruct you in the duties of the marriage state; for that office a clergyman is better qualified than a father—Then examine yourself; and if you believe the Count is the man towards whom your heart can fulfil these duties, in God's name marry him.—Till then I say no more. (calls) Henry! (*a servant enters*) Go to the minister, and desire him, if he be disengaged, to come hither for a quarter of an hour. (*The servant is going.*)

*Amelia.* And tell him, I wish him a good morning.

*Baron.* (looking at his watch) My young gentleman takes a devilish time for dressing, methinks. Come, Amelia, pour out the tea.

(*Amelia sits down at the tea table.*)

*Baron.* What sort of weather have we?—Have you put your head this morning out of the window, Amelia?

*Amelia.* Oh, I was in the garden by five o'clock; it is indeed a most charming morning.

*Baron.* One may then take an hour's shooting; I know not what else to do with my gentleman—he fatigues me terribly. Ha! here he comes!

#### SCENE V. *Enter Count von der MULDE.*

*Count.* Ah, *bon jour* mon colonel!—Dear young lady, I kiss your hand. (*Amelia curtsies.*)

*Baron.* Good morrow! good morrow! Why, count, it is almost noon. In the country one is used to rise earlier.

*Count.*

Count. *Pardonnez, mon colonel!*—I have been up ever since six o'clock; but my *homme de chambre* has been guilty of a *betise*, which has quite driven me to despair—a loss which *pour le moment* cannot be repaired.

Baron. Aye! aye! I am sorry indeed for that. *(Amelia offers him tea.)*

Count. *(taking it)* I am your most humble slave! Is it Hebe herself, or Venus, in the place of Hebe? *(Amelia looks at him sneeringly.)*

Baron. *(rather peevishly)* Neither Venus, nor Hebe, but Amelia Wildenhain with your permission. But may I be informed of your loss?

Count. Oh, my God! help me to banish the triste remembrance, I am *envelope* in a maze of perplexities. I am afraid I must even be obliged to write a letter upon the occasion.

Baron. What? is the misfortune really so great?

Count. *(sipping his tea)* 'Tis absolute nectar, most divine young lady! but could it be otherwise from your fair hands?

Baron. Indeed this nectar was sold to me for plain congou tea.

Amelia. But, my good count, you do not tell us what you have lost?

Baron. *(aside)* His understanding!

Count. You command—your slave obeys. But in doing this you tear open wounds, which even the sight of you had scarcely healed. My *homme de chambre*—the *vaut-rien*!—Oh the man is a *mauvais sujet*. As he was packing up my things the day before yesterday, I said to him, “*Henri,*” said I, “Yonder on that window stands a little pot of *pommade*.” You understand me, most charming lady, I said to him most emphatically,

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“forget

\* The reader should understand, that fine gentlemen in Germany as in England, affect to introduce phrases of bad French into familiar conversation.—Translator.

"forget it not upon any consideration, let it be packed up." I repeated it three times, nay, I believe, four times—"You know, *Henri*," I said, "that I am undone without this *pommade*;"—for you will understand, madam, they cannot make *pommade* here in Germany, they know not how to give it *l'odeur*—it is *incomparable*. I can assure you, madam, it comes *tout droit* from *Paris*, the author is *parfumeur du roi*. More than once, when I have been *dejour*\* at her highness the princess *Adelaide*, she has asked, where I could get my *pommade*, "for count," she said, "the whole *chambre* is *parfume* when you are with me *dejour*. Now only imagine, most charming lad, *et vous mon colonel*, the fellow totally forgot the *pommade*, there it stands upon the window still, as I am a true *cavalier*."

*Amelia*. (smiling) Dreadful indeed!

*Baron*. Unless the mice should have made prize of it.

*Count*. *Et voila encore, mon Colonel*, another *raison* which drives me to desperation. Would you believe it, this fellow, this *Henri*, has been thirty years in our service! For thirty years has been provided in our family with everything for which a man of his *extraction* can have occasion, and what does he now in return?—forgets my *pommade*—leaves it standing on the window—as I am a *vrai cavalier*. O *Ciel*! and the German mice will perhaps gormandize upon the most delicious *parfume* that all France can produce. But it was impossible to restrain *mon indignation*; I instantly discharged him.

*Baron*. (throwing himself back) A servant who had lived with you thirty years!

*Count*.

\* *Dejour* signifies the custom which prevailed among the female noblesse in France, of being attended by men of fashion at their toilets.—Translator.



*Count.* Oh be not uneasy! I have another in petto—an excellent servant indeed! he dresses hair like a deity.

*Amelia.* And poor Henri must be turned away for such a trifle!

*Count.* What say you, charming lady? a *Bagatelle*?

*Amelia.* Deprive a poor man of his bread!

*Count.* My God, how can I do less? Has he not deprived me of my *pomade*?

*Amelia.* May I not plead for him?

*Count.* Your sentiments transport me! but your goodness must not be abused. The man has *quantité* of children, who in the course of time, when they are arrived at an *age mur*, will be able to maintain their blockhead of a father.

*Amelia.* And has he a family too? Oh, I entreat you most earnestly, Count, not to discharge him!

*Count.* *Vous êtes aimable*, divine creature!—*très aimable*!—You command, your slave obeys. Henri shall come and kiss the skirt of your garment.

*Baron.* (*aside, rubbing his hands impatiently.*) No! that is not to be borne!—away with the coxcomb! (*to the Count*)—What say you, Count, to taking an hour's shooting before dinner?

*Count.* (*kissing the ends of his fingers.*) Bravo! *mon colonel*! a charming thought! I accept the party with pleasure. *Madame*, you will then have a sight of my elegant shooting-dress. You will find it in the very newest taste. I had it made up on purpose *pour cette occasion*. And my gun, *monseigneur le colonel*, the stock is set with mother-of-pearl, you never saw any thing finished with superior *gout*; even my arms are carved upon it.

*Baron.* (*drily*) Can you shoot?

*Count.*

*Count.* I never was out shooting but once in my life, and I cannot say then I had the fortune to attrapper any thing.

*Baron.* My gun is but an old and dull looking one to be sure—but it brings down every bird.

*Enter a Servant.* The pastor attends, sir.

*Baron.* Well then, harken, Count, and put on your elegant shooting dress, I will be with you quickly.

*Count.* I fly. My dearest lady, it is a sacrifice due to your father, I thus to tear myself away for a while from his aimable daughter.

*Baron.* Hear me, *Amelia!*—It is scarcely necessary that I should talk with the pastor, and here afterwards talk with you. But still, as he is here, leave us together—I have other matters on which I wish to confer with him.

*Amelia* (*going*). Dear father, I do not think I ever shall love the Count.

*Baron.* As you please.

*Amelia* (*meeting the pastor with a complaisant smile*). Good morrow! good morrow! dear sir.

[*Exit.*]

#### SCENE VI. *The Baron, the Pastor.*

*Pastor.* I wait your lordship's commands.

*Baron.* Excuse me if I have sent for you at an inconvenient time, a few words will comprize my business—I yesterday received a miserable translation from the French, which came from press about twenty years ago. I myself possess a very elegant German original, of which, without vanity be it spoken, I am the author. Now I am solicited to strike my name out of the original, and bind it up together with this contemptible translation—and I wish to ask you, as corrector of my work, your opinion upon the subject.

*Pastor.* Indeed, my lord, I do not understand your allegory.

*Baron.*

*Baron.* No! Humph! I am sorry for that, I thought I had framed it so dexterously—but in short then, the young Count von der Mulde is here, and would fain marry my daughter.

*Pastor.* (*Starts, but soon recovers himself*) Indeed!

*Baron.* He is a gentleman of the privy-chamber—but nothing else upon God's earth. He is—he is—in short he pleases me not.

*Pastor.* (*rather eagerly*) And your daughter?

*Baron.* (*imitating her*) As you command—if you command—what you command—Well, well, but I think you know me too well to suppose, that on such an occasion I lay any commands;—but if the man's head were not so totally empty, and his heart were right, I should have no objection; for his father is my old friend, and the match in other respects advantageous.

*Pastor.* In other respects, my Lord?—what then remains to a man, whose head and heart are good for nothing?

*Baron.* That is not what I mean—I mean as to rank and fortune. My friend, I will explain, to you my ideas upon this subject. If Amelia loved another, I should not waste a syllable upon the subject, I would only ask who he is?—is all right here? (*pointing to his heart.*) If the answers were satisfactory, in God's name they should have my blessing. But Amelia does not love any other man, which circumstance alters the case entirely.

*Pastor.* And never will love another?

*Baron.* Truly that is a different question.—But understand me. I do not mean to persist in this, I would only do what is incumbent on me, not to offend the old Count von der Mulde, by refusing to honour the bill of exchange, which he has drawn for my daughter; for I have already received the value in friendship from him; therefore I wish you to talk with my child, and explain to her the duties of the marriage state, and this done,

*Pastor.* (*ask*)

ask her, whether she be inclined to take upon herself those duties as the wife of the young Count: if she answer in the negative, 'tis enough—she shall be urged no farther. What think you of this?

*Pastor.* I—yes—certainly—I understand you well—I will talk with the young lady.

*Baron.* Yes, yes, do so! *(he fetches a deep sigh)* Ah! one weight is now removed from my mind, but another hangs more heavily upon it, and oppresses it more grievously. You understand me—No success yet, my friend? still no intelligence?

*Pastor.* I have sought it with all diligence, but hitherto in vain.

*Baron.* Believe me, this has occasioned me many a sleepless night. How often is a man guilty of errors in his youth, which in age he would give all he possesses, could they be obliterated. How does he thus lay up a store of misery to corrode the happiness of his future life, since the retrospect of the past, and the hopes and prospects of the future are inseparably linked together. Is the view behind us darken'd o'er with clouds, so surely must we encounter storms as we proceed onwards in our course. Well, well, we will hope the best. Farewell, my friend, I am going a shooting. In the mean time make your experiment, and remember to dine with me. *[Exit.]*

*Pastor.* *(alone)* What a commission!—to me. *(looking anxiously around.)* If I should meet with her directly!—No. I must first collect myself—prepare myself for the interview—at present it is impossible to encounter it—A walk in the fields, and a devout prayer to heaven—then will I return—but ah, the *instructor* alone must come hither, the *man* I must leave at home?

*[Exit.]*

ACT



## A C T III.

SCENE I. *An open Country.*

*Enter FREDERICK alone, holding some Pieces of Money in the Palm of his Hand.*

**R**ETURN with these few pieces!—Return to see my mother die!—No, no, rather plunge into the water at once—rather run on to the end of the world. Ah, my feet seem clogged—I cannot advance—I cannot recede—the sight of yonder straw-roofed cottage, where rests my suffering mother!—why must I always turn my eyes that way?—am I not surrounded by verdant fields and laughing meadows?—why must my looks be still drawn towards that cot which contains all my joys, all my sorrows! (*looks with anguish at the money*) Man! man! is this your bounty? this piece was given me by the rider of a stately horse, followed by a servant whose livery glittered with silver;—this, by a sentimental lady who had alighted from her carriage to gaze at the country, describe it, and print her description. “Yon cottage,” said I to her, while my tears interrupted me,—“It is very picturesque” she answered, and skipped into her carriage. This was given me by a fat priest, enveloped in a large bushy wig, who, at the same time, reviled me as an idler, a vagabond, and thus took away the merit of his gift. This *Dreyer* (*extremely affected*) a beggar gave me unasked;—he shared with me his mite, and, at the same time, gave me God’s blessing.  
Oh!

Oh! at the awful day of retribution, at how high a price will this dreyer be exchanged by the all righteous Judge! *(He pauses and looks again at the money)* what can I purchase with this paltry sum? Hardly will it pay for the nails of my mother's coffin—scarcely buy a rope to hang myself! *(He casts a wishful look towards the distant country)* There insultingly glitter the stately towers of the prince's residence;—shall I go thither? there implore pity?—Oh no! she dwells not in cities—the cottage of the poor is her palace—the heart of the poor her temple. Well then, should a recruiting officer pass by, for five rix-dollars paid on the spot, he shall have a stout and vigorous recruit. Five rix-dollars! Oh, what a sum! yet on how many a card may such a sum be staked, even at this moment! *(wipes the sweat from his forehead)* Father! Father! on thee fall these drops of anguish—on thee the despair of a fellow creature, and all its dreadful consequences;—yet God forbid thou shouldst languish in vain for pardon in another world, as my wretched mother languishes in this for a drop of wine. *(a hunting horn is heard at a distance,—succeeded by the "Halloo, Halloo" to the hounds; several dogs run over the stage, Frederick looks around)* Hunters! Noblemen probably. Well then, now to beg once more—to beg for my mother!—Oh God! God! grant that I may meet with compassionate hearts!

SCENE II. Enter the BARON and the COUNT.

Baron *(Waiting a few moments for the Count who follows him out of breath)* Quick, quick, Count!—Ha! ha!—that was a cursed blunder indeed—the hounds have lost the scent now and won't recover it again.

Count. *(panting for breath.)* Tant mieux, tant mieux! mon colonel!—then one may take a little breath.

breath. *(Supports himself on his gun. The baron retires into the back ground and looks after the hounds;—Fredrick advances with hesitation to the Count.)*

*Fred.* Noble Sir! I entreat alms of you!

*Count.* *(eying him from head to foot)* Comment *ami?*—you are a damned impertinent fellow, you have bones like *Hercule*,—your shoulders are equal to the *Cretan Mida's*;—I'll lay a wager you have strength enough to carry an Ox.

*Fred.* If your lordship would permit me to make the experiment.

*Count.* Our police is not careful enough of idlers and vagabonds.

*Fred.* *(with a significant look)* So it appears to me! *(turns to the baron and comes forward)* Noble Sir, have compassion on a wretched son who begs for a sick mother!

*Baron.* *(puts his hand into his pocket and gives him a trifle)* It would be more proper, my son, to work for your sick mother.

*Fred.* Willingly, willingly, would I work for her, but at this moment the necessity is too urgent.—Pardon me, worthy Sir, but what you have given me is not sufficient.

*Baron.* *(surprised and smiling)* Not sufficient?

*Fred.* By G— it is not!

*Baron.* This is singular! however, I shall give no more.

*Fred.* If you have any humanity give me a florin.

*Baron.* This is the first time that I ever heard a beggar prescribe what I should give him.

*Fred.* Oh, for heaven's sake, noble Sir, give me a florin! you will rescue a fellow-creature from despair!

*Baron.* You are beside yourself, my friend.—Come along Count.

*Count.* Allons, mon Colonel!

*Fred.* For the love of God, my Lord, give a florin! You will save the lives of two unhappy wretches! *(as he sees the Baron moving off he kneels)*



to him) a florin, noble Sir! you can never purchase the salvation of a man at a cheaper rate. (*The Baron moves onward; Frederick rushes wildly with his drawn sword upon the Baron and collars him.*) Your money or your life!

*Baron.* (*agitated*) How! what! halloo! help! help! thieves! (*Several huntsmen rush in and disarm Frederick—the Count running off.*)

*Fred.* Oh God! what have I done!

*Baron.* Bear him away! take heed of him! confine him in the tower!—I shall follow immediately.

*Fred.* (*knelling*) Only grant me one petition, my Lord! I have forfeited my life, do with me what you will, but oh assist, I entreat you assist, my poor mother! she languishes for want in yonder cottage—send thither and learn the truth! 'twas for my mother I drew my sword, for her would I shed every drop of my blood.

*Baron.* Away with him to the tower! keep him on bread and water.

*Fred.* (*as he is borne off by the huntsmen*) Accursed be my father that he ever gave me existence!

[*Exeunt.*]

*Baron.* (*to another huntsman*) Francis—hasten to the village—If in the first, the second, or the third house, you find a poor sick woman, give her this purse.

*Huntsm.* Very well, my Lord.

[*Exit.*]

*Baron.* Upon my soul this is a most extraordinary adventure! there is something noble in the young fellow's countenance—should it prove true that he begged for his mother—for his mother's sake robbed upon the highway!—Well, well, we must investigate the matter—this would indeed be a subject for one of Meissner's sketches. [*Exit.*]

### SCENE III. *A Room in the Baron's Castle.*

*Amelia.* (*alone*) Why am I thus restless? Am I bewitched? I will not stay in this room—I will go into



into the garden. (*She is going, but immediately returns.*) No, I will not go—Yes, but I think I will—I will see whether my auriculas are yet in flower, or whether the apple-kernels which our pastor lately sowed are come up.—Oh, they must be come up! (*returning again*) Then if any body should come to speak with me, I shall not be in the way, but must be called and sought for.—No, better remain here—yet the time will seem very tedious. (*She pulls a nosegay to pieces.*) Hark! did I not hear the house-door open? No, it was only the wind—I will look at my canary-birds. But suppose any body should come, and not find me in the visiting-room? Yet who is likely to come? What makes my cheeks burn thus. (*She pauses and begins to weep.*) What have I to complain of? (*Jobbing.*) Why then should I weep?

SCENE IV. *Enter the Pastor.*

*Amelia.* (*cheers up and wipes her eyes.*) Ah! good morning, dear tutor!—Pastor I would say—but you will pardon me, I have been so accustomed to call you tutor.

*Pastor.* Call me so still, dear madam, I shall always hear it with pleasure from your mouth.

*Amelia.* Indeed!

*Pastor.* Yes, indeed!—Am I mistaken? or have you not been weeping?

*Amelia.* Oh, 'tis nothing—a few tears only.

*Pastor.* Yet they are tears—may one ask what can have called them forth?

*Amelia.* I know not.

*Pastor.* Perhaps thinking of your deceased mother?

*Amelia.* I might say yes—but—

*Pastor.* A secret, perhaps—I would not be intrusive.—Pardon me, then, that I come hither at so unusual an hour—I am commissioned by your father.

*Amelia.* You are welcome to me at all times.

*Pastor.* Indeed! am I really so?—Oh, Amelia—

*Amelia.* My father teaches me, that he who forms the heart and mind is more one's benefactor, than he who merely gives one life; (*casting down her eyes*) my father says so, and my heart feels it.

*Pastor.* How sweetly does this moment repay me for eight years exertion.

*Amelia.* I was a wild girl—often have I severely tried your patience—it is no more than just that I should love you in return.

*Pastor.* (*aside*) Oh God! (*in a faltering, hesitating manner*) I—I—come from my Lord, your father—with a commission—will you sit down?

*Amelia.* (*fetches him a chair hastily*) Sit down yourself—I had rather stand.

*Pastor.* (*pushing back the chair*) Count von der Mulde—is come hither.

*Amelia.* Yes.

*Pastor.* Do you know with what intention?

*Amelia.* To marry me.

*Pastor.* That is indeed his wish (*very earnestly*)—But, believe me, madam, your father would on no account constrain you—no, he would by no means use compulsion.

*Amelia.* Ah, I know that well—

*Pastor.* But he wishes—he desires to ascertain your inclination—I come to consult your inclinations—

*Amelia.* Towards the Count?

*Pastor.* Yes—no—rather on the subject of matrimony in general.

*Amelia.* What I am ignorant of, must be indifferent to me—I know nothing of the marriage state.

*Pastor.* For that very reason I wait upon you, madam, it is the subject of my commission from your father. He wishes me to lay before you the agreeable and disagreeable sides of such a condition.

*Amelia.* Begin then with the disagreeable, the best shall be reserved to the last.

*Pastor.*

*Pastor.* With the disagreeable?—Oh, madam, when two affectionate congenial hearts unite, the marriage state has then no disagreeable side. Hand in hand the happy pair journey through life. Where they find their path occasionally strewed o'er with thorns, diligently and cheerfully they clear their way. If a stream cross their steps, the stronger bears the weaker over: or if a rock is to be climbed, the stronger takes the weaker by the hand:—patience and love are their companions. What would be impracticable to one, to their united efforts proves but sport—and when they have reached the summit, the weaker wipes the sweat from the brows of her more vigorous partner. Their joys, their pains, are never divided guests, nor will one ever experience a pang of sorrow while transport warms the bosom of the other. A smile illumines the countenance of both; or tears distil from both their eyes. But their raptures are more lively and ecstatic than single unparticipated joy; their sorrow less corroding than solitary woes: for participation enhances the one, and alleviates the other. Thus their whole life resembles a beautiful summer's day; beautiful, even though a transient shower may intervene: for showers refresh the face of nature, and the sun bursts from the cloud with renovating lustre. And when the evening of their day draws on, it finds them surrounded with flowers, which they themselves have planted and reared, patiently awaiting the approach of night. Then, then, indeed—for night will come—the one takes the lead and first lies down to sleep, and happy *that* one, to whose lot it falls:—the survivor wanders in melancholy solitude weeping at not being allowed to sleep also.—And this is the only disagreeable feature of such a marriage.

*Amelia.* Oh, I will marry!

*Pastor.* Right, madam, this picture is alluring, but recollect that 'tis a picture for which two loving and congenial hearts sat as the models. But if

motives of mere convenience (what the world generally terms prudence) if parental authority, rashness or caprice, tie the bonds of hymen, then, alas! the state of matrimony has *no* agreeable side. No longer free and unshackled, man and woman walk with light and airy steps, but victims of a late repentance drag along their galling chains. Satiety is depicted on each brow. Images of lost happiness, painted in stronger colours by imagination's delusive hand, and more tempting in proportion as they are unattainable.—Sanguine and romantic hopes, which haply might never have been realized if this marriage had not taken place, but the practicability of which the mind holds certain, if the parties were not fettered by wedlock. These ideas incessantly harass the soul, and condemn them to actual suffering, where otherwise patience only would have been called into exertion. Gradually they accustom themselves to contemplate their irksome companion as the hateful cause of all the evils which befall them. Gall infuses itself into their conversation, coldness into their caresses. To none are they more captious, from none more apt to take offence, than from their wedded partner: and what would yield them delight in a stranger, is viewed with apathy in the person of their nearest connection. In this manner, with averted face and downcast eyes, the hapless pair drag on through life, till at length one lies down to sleep;—then exultingly the survivor lifts the head and triumphantly exclaims, “Liberty! Liberty!”—And this forms the *only* pleasing feature in such a marriage.

*Amelia.* I will not marry!

*Pastor.* That is in other words to say, I will not love.

*Amelia.* Ha!—yes—I will marry—for I will love—I love already.

*Pastor.* (*extremely confused*) Indeed!—you love the Count von der Mulde?

*Amelia.*



*Amelia.* Oh no! no!—away with the fool—  
(*taking both his hands with the most cordial familiarity*)  
I love you!

*Pastor.* Madam, for God's sake!

*Amelia.* And you will I marry.

*Pastor.* Me!

*Amelia.* Yes, you, dear tutor.

*Pastor.* Amelia!—you forget—

*Amelia.* What do I forget?

*Pastor.* That you are of noble extraction.

*Amelia.* What signifies that?

*Pastor.* Oh, Heavens!—No, that cannot be.

*Amelia.* If you have an affection for me?

*Pastor.* I love you as my life.

*Amelia.* Well, then, marry me.

*Pastor.* Oh, spare me, Amelia!—I am a minister of religion, 'tis true—that gives me much fortitude—but still I am a man.

*Amelia.* You have yourself exhibited to me so alluring a picture of the marriage state!—But I am not, then, the woman with whom you could go hand in hand, with whom you could share all your joys, all your sorrows.

*Pastor.* Were it my choice, you only should be the person. Did we live in the golden days of which poets dream, when all ranks were equal, I would have you alone. But 'tis not for us to alter the customs of the world; and as the world is now constituted, you must marry a man of rank.—Whether you would be happy or not with the humble pastor, is not the question.—Oh, God! I have already said too much!

*Amelia.* Others, perhaps, may not make that a question, but it must be one with me.—Have you not often told me that the heart alone ennobles us. (*She places her hand upon his heart.*) Oh, truly, I shall marry a nobleman.

*Pastor.* Madam! let me entreat you to call in reason to your aid.—A thousand objections lie against such an union—but, at this moment, Heaven knows, not one occurs to me.

*Amelia.*

*Amelia.* Because in truth there are none.

*Pastor.* Yet, yet—but my heart is so full—my heart would plead—but that it shall not, must not. Think only of the sneers of your relations—how they will shun you, ashamed of, the new connection you have brought among them—on those solemn days when all the family should be collected together, omitting to invite you, shaking their heads when your name is mentioned, whispering your story, forbidding their children to play with yours, or even to accost them with familiarity—embroidering their arms upon their liveries, painting them upon their carriages, while you must ride in one humble and unornamented—scarcely recollecting you, should they meet you at a third place—or if they should condescend to favour you with a word, addressing you not as a lady of rank, but with scornful countenances, as the parson's wife—

*Amelia.* Ha! ha! ha! Is that so very terrible?

*Pastor.* You laugh?

*Amelia.* Yes; you must pardon me, dear tutor. For seven years was I under your instruction, but in all that time never were any of your precepts advanced upon such shallow reasonings as those you have now uttered.

*Pastor.* I am sorry for that—extremely sorry indeed! for—

*Amelia.* It rejoices me extremely—for—

*Pastor.* (*much embarrassed*) For—

*Amelia.* For—you must marry me.

*Pastor.* Never!

*Amelia.* You know me well—you know that I am not untractable, and from a constant intercourse with you I shall daily improve. I will take all possible pains to make you happy—or rather it shall be my pride to do so without exertion. Together we will live, happy, truly happy in each other, till one of us lie down to sleep, and then the other shall weep, indeed; but that is yet far distant. Well, then, consent, else shall I think you have no regard for me.

*Pastor.*

*Pastor.* Oh! it is glorious to maintain the character of a man of honour; but the task is often hard. Madam, did you but know how much you torture me!—No, no, this must not, cannot be! I should sink into the earth at the moment, were I to attempt to make such a proposal to your father.

*Amelia.* I will make it myself.

*Pastor.* For Heaven's sake, forbear! To his liberality I owe my present comfortable situation—to his friendship the happiest hours of my life—and shall I, ungrateful wretch! mislead his daughter, his only child!—Oh, God! Oh, God! thou seest the purity of my intentions! support me in this conflict.

*Amelia.* My father wishes me to marry—he wishes to see me happy. Well then, I will marry. I will be happy—but with you only. Thus will I tell my father, and what will be his answer?—At the first moment he will start, and say, “Girl, art thou mad!” but soon he will recollect himself, and, smiling, add, “Well, well, in God's name be it so.” Then will I kiss his hand, skip away from him, and fly into your arms. It shall be told about that I am betrothed; the country people, with their wives, from the whole village, will come and wish me joy, and ask God's blessing upon us both—and God will bless us.—Certainly, certainly he will bless us.—Ah! ever since my father returned hither, I have not known what it was so oppressed my heart, but I know it now—it is now lightened. *(taking his hand.)*

*Pastor.* *(withdrawing his hand.)* Oh! you have almost deprived me of my senses—and of more, of my peace of mind.

*Amelia.* No, no,—But I hear some one on the stairs—I have yet many things to say to you.

SCENE V. *Enter CHRISTIAN the Butler, an old Servant in the House.*

*Amelia.* *(peevishly)* Ah! is it you?

*Christ.*

*Christ.* Without vanity be it spoken, Christian Lebrecht Goldmann has pursued his way hither the moment the happy news reached his ears.

*Amelia.* (*embarrassed*) What news?

*Pastor.* (*confused*) He has overheard us.

*Christ.* A faithful, old servant, young lady, who has often carried the lady your mother in his arms, and, without vanity be it spoken, has received from her many a box on the ear, hath, on this joyful day, flown hither to present his humble congratulations.—Sing, Oh Muse! on the happy occasion—Strike up thy notes, Oh Lyre!

*Amelia.* Ah! my good Christian, I have no inclination at present to attend to your muse or to your lyre. And what is now the matter?

*Christ.* Ah? my noble, blessed young lady—

To-day I cannot silent be,

But hither must command to see

Trumpet, violin, and drum;

As fast as ever they can come;

And bid my verses softly flow,

As waters through the meadows go.

Hitherto has no birth-day, or wedding day, or christening-day, or their anniversaries, been solemnized in the most noble Baron's family, which has not been celebrated by an offering from my ever ready and obedient muse. In the course of six-and-forty years no less than three hundred ninety and seven congratulatory effusions have flowed from my pen. To-day, the three hundred ninety and eighth shall echo around. Who knows how soon a solemn marriage affiance in Christ may furnish an opportunity for a three hundred ninety and ninth!—and then, ha! ha! ha!—in another year will come the four hundredth.

*Amelia.* To-day is Friday—that is the only thing remarkable in it, that I can recollect.

*Christ.* Yes, indeed, it is Friday;—but more—in the first place, Heaven has been pleased to rescue our noble lord the Baron from an imminent danger—and in the second place, it is therefore a day of rejoicing.

*Amelia.*



*Amelia.* Rescued my father from danger!—  
What do you mean?

*Christ.* Even this moment has the huntsman Frank arrived in haste, and advertised the congregated household of his lordship of a piece of villainy, which the latest posterity without vanity be it spoken, never shall read without the strongest emotions of horror.

*Amelia (anxiously)* Oh! tell it me quickly.

*Christ.* Our most noble Baron, and the foreign Count of the Holy Roman Empire, had scarcely  
One half hour trodden the unbeaten way,  
To seek the nimble-footed hare to slay.

*Amelia.* For heaven's sake, tell it me in prose!

*Christ.* My Lord Baron had already shot one hare—for I myself have had the honour of seeing it; the left fore foot was quite torn to pieces.

*Amelia. (impatiently)* Well, well, but my father!

*Christ.* A second hare was already started, and the hounds pursued her with due activity, particularly Spadillio, he more than any other distinguished himself, when suddenly his honourable Lordship was met in the midst of the field by a soldier who demanded alms. Frank, the huntsman himself, saw how the most noble Baron with inexpressible kindness felt in his pocket, drew out a piece of money, and gave it to the beggar. But the ungrateful, audacious high-way robber, suddenly drew his sword, fell, without vanity be it spoken, like a mad dog upon his honourable lordship, and had not our active huntsman hastened in a moment to his assistance, I, poor old man, should have been under the mournful necessity of composing a funeral elegy, and an epitaph in commemoration of his melancholy exit.

*Amelia. (terrified)* my God!

*Pastor.* A high-way robber!—in broad daylight!—that is extraordinary!

*Christ.* I must form it into a ballad after the manner of Bürger.

*Pastor.*

*Pastor.* Is not the man taken up?

*Christ.* Yes, indeed he is. The most noble Baron has commanded, that till further orders, he be confined in the old tower. Frank says he will be here immediately: (*he steps to the window*) I believe, indeed—the sun blinds me a little—they are coming already—Sing, O muse, strike up thy notes, O lyre! (*he runs out, the others go to the window.*)

*Amelia.* Never in my life did I see a high-way robber!—he must doubtless have a terrifying physiognomy.

*Pastor.* Did you never see the Female Parricide, in Lavater's Fragments?

*Amelia.* Fye?—a female Parricide! Can such a monster exist in the world?—But look—the young man approaches—an interesting figure indeed!—a noble countenance!—yet it is full of sorrow!—the poor man excites my compassion.—No, no; he cannot be a high-way robber!—Oh, fye, fye! see how the huntsmen thrust him into the tower! hard-hearted wretches!—now they lock the door—and now he is in total darkness—what must be the feelings of the unhappy wretch!

*Pastor.* (*aside*) They can scarcely be more poignant than mine.

#### SCENE VI. *Enter the BARON.*

*Amelia.* (*running up to him*) A thousand congratulations to you, dear father!

*Baron.* For God's sake spare me!—Old Christian has been pouring out his congratulations to me in Alexandrines all the way up stairs.

*Pastor.* The story then is true?—indeed, as related by the talkative old Butler, it appeared wholly incredible.

*Amelia.* The young man with the interesting countenance was, indeed, a high-way robber?

*Baron.* 'Tis true; yet I am almost convinced that he was so for the first and last time in his life. My friend, (*to the pastor*) it was a most singular accident.—

accident.——The young man begged of me for his mother.—I gave him a trifle—I might, perhaps have given him more, but the hares were running in my head, and the cry of the hounds filled my ears. You know well, that when a man pursues his pleasure, he has no sense of the afflictions of his brethren. In short, he wanted more—despair was in his whole manner, yet I turned my back upon him; lost to himself he drew his sword, but I would wager my life against Amelia's head dress, that highway-robbery is not his trade.

*Amelia.* Certainly not.

*Baron.* He trembled as he held me by the breast, a child might have knocked him down. Oh, it was a shame that I did not suffer the poor wretch to escape. My sport may perhaps cost him his life, and I might have saved it—saved the life of a man for a florin only. Ah, that he had not been seen by my people! but the bad example!—come with me to my closet, good Pastor, we must contrive how we can best save the young man, for should he be delivered over to the arm of justice, he cannot be saved. (*Going.*)

*Amelia.* Dear father, I have had much conversation with the Pastor.

*Baron.* Have you?—and on the subject of the holy marriage state?

*Amelia.* Yes; I have told him.

*Pastor.* (*extremely embarrassed.*) In consequence of my commission——

*Amelia.* He will not believe me.

*Pastor.* I have explained to the young lady.——

*Amelia.* And indeed I spoke from my heart——

*Pastor.* (*pointing to the closet.*) May I request——

*Amelia.* But his diffidence——

*Pastor.* The result of our conversation shall be related in your closet.——

*Baron.* What the devil is the matter now;—you interrupt each other, so that neither can go on. Amelia, have you entirely forgotten all the rules of politeness?

*Amelia.* Oh, no, dear father!—but 'is it not true that you said you would let me marry whom I should chuse?

*Baron.* Assuredly!

*Amelia.* Hear you not, dear Tator?

*Pastor.* (*takes out his handkerchief in haste, and holds it to his face.*) I beg your pardon, my Lord, I am not well. [Exit.

*Baron.* (*calls after him*) I shall expect you! (*Going.*)

*Amelia.* Stop a moment, dear father! I have most important things to communicate.

*Baron.* (*smiling*) Important things! I suppose you want me to buy you a new fan. [Exit.

*Amelia.* (*alone*) A fan—indeed, I think I am in want of a fan, (*she fans herself with her pocket-handkerchief*) my cheeks burn so; but this will not relieve me! Ah, my God how my heart beats!--I do, indeed I do, most dearly love the Pastor; how unfortunate that he should be taken ill just now;—No, the Count scarcely deserves the name of man. When I contemplate my father or the Pastor, I feel a sort of reverence; but the Count I feel only disposed to ridicule. (*she goes to the window*) The tower is still locked. Oh how terrible must be such confinement!--I wonder whether the poor man has any thing to eat and drink! (*she beckons and calls*) Christian! Christian! come hither directly!--the young man interests me--I know not why, but he does interest me: he has hazarded his life for his mother, that does not bespeak a bad heart.

#### SCENE VII.--AMELIA, CHRISTIAN.

*Amelia.* Ah, good Christian, tell me, have you carried the prisoner any thing to eat?

*Christ.* Yes, my most benevolent lady!

*Amelia.* What have you carried him?

*Christ.* Good black bread, and fine clear water.

*Amelia.* Oh fye!--are you not ashamed?--hasten instantly into the kitchen and get some meat from the



the cook, then fetch a bottle of wine from the cellar, and carry them to him immediately.

*Christ.* Most gladly would I fulfil the will of my most benevolent lady, but at present he must be content with bread and water, for the most noble lord baron hath expressly commanded——

*Amelia.* Ah, my father only did that in the first moments of passion.

*Christ.* What our noble masters command in passion, 'tis the duty of a faithful old servant, without vanity be it spoken, to obey in cold blood.

*Amelia.* You are a stupid fellow!--so old, and have not yet learnt that 'tis your duty to comfort the unfortunate. Give me the key of the cellar, I will go myself.

*Christ.* I solemnly protest most blessed Lady——

*Amelia.* Give it to me I command you.

*Christ.* (*gives her the key*) I must go immediately, and exculpate myself to his honourable Lordship.

*Amelia.* You may do that with all my heart.

[*Exit hastily.*]

*Christ.* (*after a pause, and shaking his head.*)

In woe and anguish,

Each day to languish,

Is right affecting

And dejecting.

Is then the youthful mind

To follow good inclin'd

Let him still in memory keep

The good old proverb, look before you leap.

[*Exit.*]

## A C T IV.

SCENE I. *A Prison in an old Tower in the Castle of Wildenhain.*

FREDERICK (*alone.*)

**H**OW can a few moments of anguish—one hour of devouring misery swallow up all the past happiness of a man's life! When I left the inn this morning, the sun just rising, and I sang my morning song, oh how cheerful, how happy was I! in thought I banqueted at the table of joy,—I dreamt with transport of the first re-union with my mother!—I meant to steal along the road towards the spot where she once dwelt; thought how I should creep close by the wall, that she might not from the window espy my approach; and when arrived at the house door, how I should softly, softly pull the bell.—Then in idea, I saw her lay aside her work, rise up and come down, I thought how my heart would beat, when I should hear her steps upon the stairs, how she would open the door to me, and I should throw myself into her arms. But oh, farewell, ye air-built castles, ye variegated bubbles, seen through hope's prismatic glass!—I returned to my native land, and the first object which met my eyes was my dying mother, my first habitation is a prison, and my first excursion will be to the place of execution. Oh righteous God! have I deserved this fate? or must the son answer for the crimes of a father! But be still, my heart—I entangle myself in a labyrinth!—To suffer without murmuring, to sorrow and be silent! Such is the lesson taught me by my mother, and she hath suffered much!—Thou, oh God, thou art just! (*looks towards heaven with uplifted hands.*)

SCENE

SCENE II.—*Enter AMELIA with a plate of provisions and a bottle of wine.*

*Fred. (turning round at the noise)* Who's there?

*Amelia.* My good friend, I bring you some refreshment—you may perhaps be hungry or thirsty.

*Fred.* Alas no! I feel neither hunger or thirst.

*Amelia.* Here is a bottle of old wine, and some meat.

*Fred. (eagerly)* Old wine! really good old wine?

*Amelia.* I do not understand much of wine myself, but I have often heard my father say this wine is a true cordial.

*Fred.* Ten thousand, thousand thanks, lovely, amiable Unknown! You make me a costly present indeed, in this bottle of wine.—Oh hasten, hasten, then, most benevolent tender-hearted maiden, let it be instantly dispatched to the neighbouring village; close by the public-house stands a little cottage, where will be found a poor, sick woman—a fainting woman, whom, if she yet live, this wine will revive! *(he takes the bottle from Amelia's hand, and raises it up towards heaven.)* Oh God! bless this liquor! why can I not myself?—*(gives back the bottle to Amelia)* but no—hasten, hasten then with it, most amiable of your sex! save my mother, and you will be my guardian angel.

*Amelia. (much affected)* Worthy creature! Oh I am right, he cannot be a villain, a murderer!

*Fred.* God be thanked, that I still deserve to be noticed by so noble a soul!

*Amelia.* I will go myself immediately. But let me leave this bottle of wine here; I will fetch another for your poor mother. *(she sets down the bottle and is going.)*

*Fred.* Yet one word more. Let me know, sweet maiden, who you are, that in my prayers to heaven, your name may be remembered.

*Amelia.* My father is Baron Wildenhain, the possessor of this estate.

*Fred.* Merciful God!!!—

*Amelia.* What is the matter?

*Fred.* (*Shuddering*) And the man against whom I this day drew my sword!—

*Amelia.* Was my father?

*Fred.* My father!!!

*Amelia.* His agitation alarms me. (*She runs out.*)

### SCENE III. FREDERICK. (*Alone.*)

(*He repeats the words with agony.*) Was my father!—Eternal justice thou slumberest not!—The man against whom I drew my sword this day—was my father!—A few moments more, and I had been a parricide!—Oh—h—h! an icy coldness freezes all my limbs—my hair stands an end—a mist floats before my sight—Oh for breath! for breath! (*he sinks down on his seat—a long pause.*) What a tumult does this idea raise in my brain!—how the horrid images flit before my eyes as clouds and vapours, which every moment change their forms.—And if fate had destined him thus to be sacrificed!—had my arm consummated the dreadful stroke!—Great Judge of all things, whose had been the guilt?—Would not thyself have armed the hand of the son, to avenge a mother's wrongs on an unnatural father?—Oh Zadig! Zadig!\*—(*he is lost for some minutes in deep reflection*)—but this maiden—this amiable, lovely, inexpressibly lovely creature, who has just left me,—who has awakened a new and most delightful sensation in my breast,—this lovely creature is my sister!—And the silly being, the coxcomb, who accompanied my father, was he then my brother?—an ill-educated boy, who as it appears to me from his youth considered as the only heir, has been taught to regard nothing but his wealth, his rank, and is thus inflated with his own

\* Referring to Voltaire's well-known novel of "Zadig, or the Book of Fate." T.

consequence,



consequence, while I, his brother, and my dear mother, suffer want.

SCENE IV. *Enter PASTOR.*

*Pastor.* God preserve you, my friend!

*Fred.* And you too, Sir. Judging by your appearance, you are of the church; therefore, also a messenger of peace. You are doubly welcome to me.

*Pastor.* I wish to bring peace and tranquillity to your soul. Reproaches I shall spare, for your own conscience must upbraid you more loudly than the preacher's voice.

*Fred.* Oh, you are right!—Where conscience is silent, are you not of opinion, that the crime at least is doubtful?

*Pastor.* Or must have been perpetrated by a wicked and obdurate heart indeed.

*Fred.* That is not my case. I really would not change this heart for that of any prince—no, nor any priest.—Pardon me, Sir, that was not aimed at you.

*Pastor.* And if it was, mildness is the character of the religion I teach.

*Fred.* I only mean to say—that my heart is not obdurate, yet my conscience does not reproach me with a crime.

*Pastor.* Does it not deceive you?—Self-love sometimes supplies the place of conscience.

*Fred.* No! no!—Oh, 'tis a pity that I am not more endued with learning,—that I understand not in what way properly to arrange my ideas,—that I can only feel—that I cannot demonstrate!—Yet, let me ask you, Sir, what was my crime?—that I would have robbed!—Oh, for a few moments put yourself in my place:—have you any parents?

*Pastor.* No, I was early left an orphan.

*Fred.* Pity!—pity indeed! then you cannot fairly judge me.—Yet will I describe my case as well as I am able. I think, when one looks around, and sees how  
nature

nature every where exuberantly pours forth her ample stores ; when one observes this spectacle, and beholds at the same time a dying mother by one's side, who with parched tongue faints for a drop of wine—if then one rich, and blessed with abundance, should pass by, and should deny the despairing wretch a florin, because—because it would interrupt his sport—then suddenly the feelings of the equality of all mankind should be awakened in the sufferer's soul, and seeing himself neglected by fortune, he should determine to resume his rights—rights authorised by nature, who is not unjust to any of her children ; and should instinctively grasp at a small share of those bounties which she presents to all—Such a man does not plunder, he rightly takes his own.

*Pastor.* My friend, were these principles universal, they would cut asunder every tie that binds society, and change us soon into Arabian hordes.

*Fred.* 'Tis possible ! and 'tis also possible, that we should not be more unhappy.—Among the hospitable Arabs my Mother should not have been suffered to starve on the highway !

*Pastor.* (*much surprised*) Young man, you appear to have had an education above your rank.

*Fred.* That is foreign to the purpose—for what I am, I am indebted to my mother,—I would only represent to you, why my conscience does not accuse me.—The judge pronounces sentence according to the letter of the law, the Divine should judge not merely the deed itself, but the motive which prompted it. The Judge might condemn me, but you, oh Sir, would instantly pronounce my pardon.—That the glutton, who picks even the last morsel from his pheasant's bones, should leave unmolested his neighbour's black bread, can be no merit.

*Pastor.* Well, young man ! suppose I grant your sophism ; grant, that perhaps your peculiar situation allowed you to *take* what you could not obtain by solicitation, does that also exculpate murder, which you meditated ?

*Fred.*

*Fred.* Murder! no, it does not exculpate that. Still I was but the instrument of a higher power. In this adventure, you only behold one solitary link of a mighty chain, held by an invisible hand. On this subject I cannot explain, cannot justify myself. Yet, shall I appear with serenity before my judge, with calmness meet my death, convinced that an all-powerful hand intends by my blood, the accomplishment of some great purpose in the career of fate.

*Pastor.* It is well worth some pains, most extraordinary young man, to be better acquainted with you, and perhaps to give a different complexion to many of your ideas. If it be possible, continue with me for some weeks, and give me your confidence. Your sick mother I will also take to my house.

*Fred.* (*embraces him.*) A thousand thanks for my poor mother's sake. With respect to myself, you know that I am a prisoner, in expectation of receiving sentence of death. The respite which the forms of justice may afford, use at your pleasure.

*Pastor.* You are mistaken.--You are in the hands of a noble-minded man, who honours your filial love, compassionates your unhappy situation, and heartily forgives you what has this day happened. You are free--He sent me hither to announce to you your liberty, and with a paternal exhortation, a brotherly admonition, to release you from your prison.

*Fred.* And the name of this generous man?

*Pastor.* Is the Baron von Wildenhain.

*Fred.* Von Wildenhain! (*as if he was recollecting himself*) Did he not live formerly in Franconia\*?

*Pastor.* You are right. But at the death of his Lady, a few weeks since, he returned to this, his paternal estate.

\* In the performance, *Alsace*, and *France*, are throughout used instead of *Franconia*; no reason for this appears. It was probably a mistake arising from the substantive *Franken*, i. e. *Franconia*, being applied in modern language to French as an adjective, instead of *Französer*. T.

*Fred.*

*Fred.* His wife then is dead?—and that amiable girl, who was here just before your arrival, is his daughter?

*Pastor.* Yes, she is his daughter, the Lady Amelia.

*Fred.* And the *perfumed* young man is his son?

*Pastor.* He has no son.

*Fred.* (*eagerly*) Yes he has! (*recollecting himself*) I mean the young man who was sporting with him to-day.

*Pastor.* No, he is not his son.

*Fred.* (*aside*) God be thanked!

*Pastor.* Only a visitor from town.

*Fred.* I thank you for this information; it is highly interesting to me. I also thank you for the kind trouble you have taken, the philanthropy you have shewn. It grieves me that I cannot offer you my friendship—were we equals it might be of some value.

*Pastor.* Has not friendship this property in common with love, that it equalizes all ranks?

*Fred.* No, kind Pastor, this enchantment is peculiar to love alone!—Yet I have one more request to make—Conduct me to the Baron von Wildenhain, and procure me, if it be in your power, a few minutes conversation with him in private; I wish to thank him for his benevolence, but if any one be with him, I should be confused, and could not speak with so much confidence.

*Pastor.* Follow me.

[*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE V. *A room in the Castle.*

*The BARON seated on a chair, and smoking his pipe—AMELIA in conversation with him—The COUNT upon the Sopha, one moment taking snuff, another holding a smelling-bottle to his nose.*

*Baron.* No, no, my child, let it alone at present, towards



---towards evening when it grows cool, we may take a walk that way.

*Amelia.* It is so delightful to do a good action!-- why then should one transfer it to a servant? To confer a kindness is a real joy, and no one is of too high rank for enjoyment.

*Baron.* Simpleton, who spoke of rank? That was a silly remark which almost makes me angry. I tell you I have sent thither myself, the woman is better; and in the evening we will take a walk thither together. The Pastor shall conduct us.

*Amelia.* (*tolerably satisfied*) Well as you please. (*She sits down and takes out her work.*)

*Baron.* (*to the Count*) It will be a great pleasure to you, also, Count.

*Count.* *Je n'en doute pas, mon Colonel*, the *douceur* and the *bonté d'ame* of *Mademoiselle* will charm me. But what if the good woman should have gotten some epidemical disease? However I have a *vinaigre incomparable* against the plague,—we will at least be prepared with that.

*Baron.* As you please, Count. I do not know any better preservative to offer you against *ennui*, than such a cordial.

*Count.* *Ennui*, oh *mon Colonel*! Who can think of *ennui* in the same house with *Mademoiselle*?

*Baron.* Very gallantly spoken!—*Amelia*, don't you thank the Count.

*Amelia.* I thank him, truly. (*The Count makes a complimentary bow.*)

*Baron.* Tell me, Count, did you reside long in France?

*Count.* Oh talk not to me of France, I entreat you, *mon Colonel*—you rend my heart.—My father, *le barbare*, had the *sottise* to refuse me a thousand *Louis-d'ors* which I had *destiné* for that purpose. It is true I was there some months—I have indeed seen that dear place replete with charms, and spite of *le barbare de pere*, I had perhaps been there still, but for a most unpleasant occurrence.

*Baron.*

Baron. (*sneeringly*) Probably *une affaire d'honneur*.

Count. *Point du tout*, but it was no longer a place in which a *vrai Cavalier* would remain with credit to himself. You have heard of the Revolution! Oh yes, you must have heard of it, for it is the conversation of all Europe.—*Eh bien! imaginez vous!*—I was at Paris, I went into the *Palais Royal*, I knew nothing at all of what was passing—*tout d'un coup*, I perceived myself surrounded by a crowd of dirty ragamuffins, one kicked me on one side, another pushed me on the other side, another thrust his fists in my face.—I asked what was the meaning of all this? They abused me, and cried that I had no cockade in my hat—you understand me, no national cockade. I screamed out that I was *Comte du Saint Empire*. What did they do!—they absolutely caned me—*foi d'honnête homme* they caned me, and a dirty *Poissarde* gave me a fillip on the nose!—indeed there were even some who would have had me *a la lanterne!*—What say you to this? what would you have done *a ma place?* I threw myself with all possible expedition into my post-chaise, and hastened away with all possible speed.—*Voilà tout!* it is indeed *une histoire fâcheuse*, but nevertheless I must ever regret the *moments délicieuses* which I have tasted in that *capitale du monde*, and this I must say, this must every one perceive, that though indeed, I passed but a few months there, *mon savoir vivre, mon formation, and, le plie*, which is observed in me, perfectly *Francoise*, perfectly *Parisien*.

Baron. Of that I am no judge, but your language does not appear to me German.

Count. Ah, *mon Colonel*, you pay me a high compliment.

Baron. I am glad you take it as such.

Count. Then all my *soins* have happily not been taken *à pure perte*. For five years past have I made every possible effort totally and completely to forget German. What say you, Madam, is not the German language entirely devoid of grace, and at best, only *supportable* in

in so lovely a mouth as yours. That eternal guggling and rattling in the throat—*a tout moment*—one reels—*one stumbles*—it does not flow, roll, smoothly on—as *par exemple*; one would make a *declaration d'amour*, one wishes is to be a *chef d'œuvre d'éloquence*. Well, one studies it, but, *belas*, scarcely has one gone through a *douzaine* of words, but the tongue hitches now here, now there; trusts itself first one way, then the other; the teeth run *pêle mêle* against one another; the throat quarrels with the roof of the mouth, and if one did not throw in a few French words to set all to rights again, one should run the hazard of losing, irrecoverably, the faculties of speech. *Et convenez vous à cela Mademoiselle*, that this cannot be otherwise—for why? we have no *genies célèbres*, whose taste is properly refined. I know, indeed, that at present the Germans pique themselves much, *sur la gout, la lecture, les belles lettres*. There is a certain Monsieur Wieland, who has gained some *renomée*, by translating some tales from the *Mille et une nuits*, but *mon Dieu*, still the original is French.

Baron. But what the devil is the matter, Count, that you are every moment snuffing up your *tabac*, or holding your smelling-bottle to your nose, and drenching your clothes and my sofa with *Eau de Lavande*, and making the air in my room so *fude*, that it is like the shop of a French *Marchand des modes*.

Count. *Pardonnez, mon Colonel*, but it must be confessed that the smoke of your tobacco is altogether *insupportable*—my nerves are most sensibly affected with it—my clothes must be hung a month at least in the open air to purify them—and I assure you, *mon Colonel*, it even gives a tinge to the hair. It is a vile custom, which indeed one must pardon in *Messieurs de Militaire*, because *en campagne*, they have no opportunity of mixing with the *beau monde*, and acquiring the manners of *ton*. But in the mean time, there is no possibility of enduring this horrible smell any longer.—*Vous m'excuserez, mon Colonel*—but I must go and breathe a little fresh air, and change my clothes.

[Exit.

G

SCENE

SCENE VI. *The BARON and AMELIA.*

*Baron.* Bravo, my young gentleman!—I know, now, however, a means of getting rid of you, when I am tired of your twattling.

*Amelia.* Dear father, I cannot take him for a husband.

*Baron.* Dear child, I cannot take him for a son.

*Amelia.* (*who appears to have something on her mind.*) I cannot endure him.

*Baron.* Nor I neither.

*Amelia.* What can one do, if one cannot bear the man?

*Baron.* Nothing at all.

*Amelia.* Love comes and goes unsolicited.

*Baron.* It does so indeed.

*Amelia.* It is often scarcely possible to give a reason why one loves or hates.

*Baron.* That may be the case.

*Amelia.* Yet there are cases in which one's inclination, or aversion, are founded upon good grounds.

*Baron.* Undoubtedly.

*Amelia.* For example, my aversion to the Count.

*Baron.* Certainly.

*Amelia.* And my inclination towards the Pastor.

*Baron.* Yes. (*Both pause.*)

*Amelia.* Probably I may marry.

*Baron.* And you ought to marry. (*Both pause again.*)

*Amelia.* Why does not our Pastor marry?

*Baron.* That you must ask him himself. (*Pause again.*)

*Amelia.* (*She keeps her eyes constantly on her work, at which she seems very busily employed.*) He seemed to have a great regard for me.

*Baron.* I am glad to hear it.

*Amelia.* And I have also a great regard for him.

*Baron.* That is but just. (*Another pause.*)

*Amelia.* I believe if you were to offer him my hand, he would not refuse it.

*Baron.* I believe so myself.

*Amelia.*



*Amelia.* And I would readily obey you.

*Baron.* (*With particular attention.*) Indeed! Are you serious?

*Amelia.* Oh yes!

*Baron.* Ha! ha! ha!—well we shall see!

*Amelia.* (*Looking up more cheerfully.*) Are you really serious, dear Father?

*Baron.* Oh no!

*Amelia.* (*Dejectedly again.*) No!

*Baron.* No, Amelia—that will not do—to play such a pretty romance, like Abelard and Heloise, or St. Preux and Julie—does not accord with our rank, and the Pastor himself is too honourable to think of such a thing.

*Amelia.* You are his benefactor.

*Baron.* At least he thinks me so.

*Amelia.* And can any thing be more honourable than to make the daughter of his benefactor happy?

*Baron.* But if this daughter be a child, and has childish fancies, and wishes to day to possess a toy, which perhaps to morrow she may throw away in spleen?

*Amelia.* Oh no, I am not such a child!

*Baron.* Listen to me, Amelia!—A hundred Fathers would say to you, you are of rank yourself, you must marry a man of rank.—But I do not say so—my child shall not be sacrificed to prejudice—a woman never can obtain rank by merit, therefore never has reason to be proud of it.

*Amelia.* And therefore—

*Baron.* Therefore I say, in God's name, marry the Pastor, if you do not find among our young men of rank, one, who for person and endowments of heart and mind, corresponds with your ideas.—There may be many of this description—many, perhaps—but as yet you know too little of men in general, to have formed your judgment upon this point. Wait till the ensuing winter—we will spend it in town—we will frequent balls and assemblies, perhaps you may then think differently.

*Amelia.*

*Amelia.* Oh no!—I must first know a man well, and may even then be deceived in him. But with our Pastor I have been so long, so intimately acquainted, that I can read his heart as plainly as my catechism.

*Baron.* Amelia, thou hast never loved. The Pastor educated you, and you mistake your ardent gratitude for love, ignorant of what love really is.

*Amelia.* You explained the subject to me this morning.

*Baron.* Did I so?—Well, and my questions?—

*Amelia.* All applied to the Pastor, as if you had penetrated the inmost recesses of my heart.

*Baron.* Really!—Humph!—Humph!

*Amelia.* Yes, dear Father, I love, and am also beloved.

*Baron.* Are also beloved!—Has he told you so?

*Amelia.* Yes.

*Baron.* Fye! fye!—that was not right in him.

*Amelia.* Oh if you knew how I took him by surprise?

*Baron.* You took him by surprise?

*Amelia.* He came by your desire, to speak to me in behalf of the Count, and I told him I never would marry the Count.

*Baron.* But would marry him?

*Amelia.* Yes, him.

*Baron.* Very frank, by my soul!—and what answered he?

*Amelia.* He talked to me about my rank, my family, my uncles and aunts—of his duty to you—and, in short, would have persuaded me to think no more of this. But my heart could not suffer itself to be persuaded.

*Baron.* That was honourable in him—And probably he will speak to me on this subject?

*Amelia.* No, he said that was impossible!

*Baron.* So much the better—then I may be supposed ignorant of the whole affair.

*Amelia.* But I assured him—that I would speak myself.

*Baron.*

*Baron.* So much the worse—that embarrasses me exceedingly.

*Amelia.* And now I have done as I said I would.

*Baron.* Truly you have.

*Amelia.* Dear Father!

*Baron.* Dear Child!

*Amelia.* See the tears will come into my eyes.

*Baron.* (*Turning from her.*) Suppress them!  
(*Bo h pause; Amelia rises from her seat, and bends downwards, as if looking for something.*) What do you look for?

*Amelia.* I have lost my needle.

*Baron.* (*Pushes back his seat and bends forwards to assist her.*) It cannot be gone so far.

*Amelia.* (*Approaches and falls tenderly on his neck.*)  
My dear Father!

*Baron.* Well, and what now?

*Amelia.* This one request!—

*Baron.* Let me go!—You make my cheeks wet with your tears!

*Amelia.* I never can love any other—never can be happy with any other.

*Baron.* Buffoonery, Amelia!—Childishness!—be a good girl! (*he strokes her cheeks.*) Sit down again!—we will talk more of this another time—it is not a matter that needs such great haste—there is no occasion for an extra-post upon the subject. The knot that binds you together is tied in a moment—the state of wedlock endures for years. Many a girl sheds tears, because she thinks she cannot have her lover, and if she attain him at last, perhaps, sheds torrents of tears that she can never be released from him. Thou hast relieved thy heart of its oppressive burden, and thy Father now bears it in his—bears it for thee, for his dear Amelia.—So small a wound time will soon heal, or if it do not, then thou may'st chuse thy physician.

*Amelia.* My dear, kind Father!

*Baron.* Aye truly, had thy Mother been alive, thou wouldest not have escaped so easily—she would have clung to the sixteen generations, which she numbered as her ancestors.

SCENE VII. *Enter the PASTOR.*

*Baron.* You are come opportunely.

*Pastor.* In consequence of your order, my Lord, I have released the young man from his prison. He is in the anti-chamber, and wishes to return you his thanks in person.

*Baron.* I am pleased to hear it—I must not suffer him to depart empty-handed, I would not confer benefits by halves.

*Pastor.* He intreats a few words with you in private.

*Baron.* In private—Wherefore?

*Pastor.* He pleaded his confusion in the presence of witnesses. Perhaps he has some discovery to make, of which he wishes to relieve his heart.

*Baron.* Well, be it so!—Retire Amelia, remain in the anti-chamber with the Pastor. I wish afterwards to speak to you both. (*Amelia withdraws—the Pastor opens the door, introduces Frederick, and retires.*)

SCENE VIII. *BARON and FREDERICK.*

*Baron.* (*Approaching him.*) Depart with God's blessing, my friend, you are free! I have sent to your mother, she is better, for her sake I pardon you, but beware of a repetition of your offence; highway-robbing is a bad trade. There is a Louis-d'or—seek some creditable employment, and if I hear that you are diligent and orderly in your behaviour, my doors and my purse shall always be open to assist you. Go, my friend, and heaven support you!

*Frederick.* (*Taking the Louis-d'or.*) You are a liberal man, free in parting with your money—not sparing of your good advice. But I have a still greater favour to entreat of you.—You are a rich man, a man of influence, assist me to obtain justice against an unnatural Father!

*Baron.* How!—who is your Father?

*Fred.* (*with anguish.*) A man of rank, lord of much land, and over many tenants—esteemed at court



court—honoured in the state—beloved by his peasants—benevolent, noble-hearted, generous—

*Baron.* And yet suffers his Son to want?

*Fred.* Yet suffers his Son to want!

*Baron.* Doubtless not without reason. You were perhaps a wild young fellow, libertine in your principles and practices; gamed, kept a mistress, and your Father therefore, thought that following the drum for a few years might have good effect in correcting irregularities. And if this be really the case, I cannot think your Father has done wrong.

*Fred.* You mistake, Sir, my Father knows me not—never has seen me—he cast me off even before my birth.

*Baron.* How!

*Fred.* The tears of my Mother are all the inheritance I ever received from my Father. Never has he enquired after me, never concerned himself whether I had existence.

*Baron.* That is bad! (*much confused*) very bad indeed!

*Fred.* I am the unhappy offspring of a stolen amour. My poor seduced Mother has educated me amidst sighs and anguish—with the labour of her hands she gained a sufficiency to enable her, in some degree, to cultivate my heart and mind—and I think I am, through her care, become a man, who might be a source of joy to any father. But mine, willingly forgoes this pleasure, and his conscience leaves him at ease respecting the fate of his unhappy child.

*Baron.* At ease!—Oh if his conscience can be at ease under such circumstances, he must be a hardened villain indeed!

*Fred.* As I grew up, and wished no longer to be a burden upon my indigent mother, I had no other resource but to assume these garments, and I entered into the service of a volunteer corps—for one illegally born cannot be received as an apprentice by any tradesman or artist.

*Baron.* Unfortunate young man!

*Fred.*

*Fred.* Thus, amidst turmoils, passed the early years of my life—care and sorrow are the companions nature gives to the maturer man. To the thoughtless youth she generally gives pleasure, and through its enjoyment, strengthens the mind against future days of trouble; but the joys of my youth were coarse, harsh bread, with pure water, and stripes from the serjeant's hand. Yet, what signifies that to my Father!—his table is splendidly set out, and to the lishes of conscience he is insensible.

*Baron. (Aside.)* This young man wrings my heart:

*Fred.* After a separation of five years, from my Mother, I this day returned home, full of love for the country which contained that dear parent—full of the sweetest dreams—of the most pleasing pictures imagination could form. I found my poor mother sick—reduced to beggary—not having eaten for two days—no bundle of straw on which to lay her head—no shelter against rain or storms—no compassionate heart to close her eyes—no spot whereon to die in peace. But what does that concern my father? He has a fine castle, sleeps on soft beds of down, and when he dies, the minister of religion will in a pompous funeral sermon, hand down to posterity his many christian virtues.

*Baron. (Shuddering.)* Young man, what is thy father's name?

*Fred.* That he abused the weakness of a guiltless maiden,—deceived her through false oaths—that he gave existence to an unhappy wretch, who must curse him for the fatal gift—that he has driven his only son almost to parricide—Oh these are trifles—and when the day of reckoning comes, may all be paid by a piece of gold!—(throws the Louis-d'or at the Baron's feet.)\*

*Baron. (Half distracted.)* Young man, tell me thy father's name!

*Fred.* Baron Wildenhain! (The Baron strikes his forehead with both hands, and remains fixed to the spot where he stands. Frederick proceeds with violent emotion.)

tion.) Yes, in this house, in this very room, perhaps, was my mother beguiled of her virtue, and I was begotten for the sword of the executioner. And now, my Lord, I am not free—I am your prisoner—I will not be free.—I am a highway-robber—loudly do I accuse myself as such—you shall consign me over to the hand of justice—shall conduct me to the place of execution—you shall hear how the priest seeks in vain to calm my mind—shall hear how in despair, I curse my father—shall stand by me as the head falls from the trunk—and my blood—your own blood—shall sprinkle your garments!

*Baron.* Oh hold! hold!

*Fred.* And when you turn from this scene, and descend from the scaffold—there at its foot shall you find my mother, even at the moment that she draws her last breath—sighs out her soul in anguish!

*Baron.* Inhuman! hold!

[*The PASTOR rushes in hastily.*]

*Pastor.* Heaven's what is the matter?—I hear impassioned words!—what has been passing here?—young man, I hope you have not attempted—

*Fred.* Yes, sir, I have attempted to take your office from your hands—I have made a sinner tremble! (*pointing to the Baron.*) See there—thus after a lapse of one and twenty years, the injuries arising from inordinate passions, are revenged.—I am a murderer.—I am a highway-robber—but what I feel in this moment is transport, is bliss, compared with the thorns which lacerate his breast. I go to surrender myself up to justice, and then at the throne of heaven will I appear a bloody witness against this man. [*Exit.*]

#### SCENE IX.—*The BARON—the PASTOR.*

*Pastor.* For heaven's-sake what is the matter?—I cannot understand.—

*Baron.* Oh he is my son! he is my son!—away, my friend, advise me—assist me, hasten to the poor sick woman in the village—Frank will shew you the way—hasten!—oh hasten!—

*Pastor.*

*Pastor.* But what am I to do!

*Baron.* Oh God!—your own heart must instruct you! (*Exit the Pastor—the BARON proceeds with great emotion, holding his head with both his hands.*) Am I in my senses?—or are these only visions of fancy?—I have a son, a brave, a noble youth, and I have not yet clasped him in my arms, have not yet pressed him to my heart!—(*calls*) Rodolph! (*Enter a Huntsman.*) Where is he?

*Huntsman.* Who, my Lord?—the highway-robber?

*Baron.* Sluggard!—the young man that even now went hence!

*Huntsman.* He is going before the justice—we have sent after the constable.

*Baron.* Let the constable be kicked down stairs when he comes—let no one dare lay hands upon the young man.

*Huntsman.* (*surprised.*) Very well, my Lord. (*going.*)

*Baron.* Stay, Rodolph!

*Huntsman.* Most noble Lord!

*Baron.* Conduct the young soldier into the green-room by the dining-hall, and attend upon him as his servant.

*Huntsman.* The count von der Mulde lodges there, my Lord.

*Baron.* Let him be kicked out, and sent to the devil.—(*The Huntsman stands perplexed, not knowing what he should do, the Baron walks eagerly backwards and forwards.*) I want no son-in-law!—I have a son—a son who shall continue my name, and inherit my estates—a son in whose arms I will die.—Yes, I will atone to him for all—I will suffer no false shame to restrain me!—All my tenants, all my servants, shall know it;—know that I could forget my child—but that I am not hardened in my guilt. Rodolph!

*Huntsman.* My Lord!

*Baron.* Conduct him hither!—entreat him to come in, and let all who are in the anti-chamber come with him. (*Rodolph goes out.*) Oh! my heart!—What is it thus makes my blood rush through my viens, that from the crown of my head even to the sole of my foot,  
I am



I am pulsation all over!—'Tis joy!—joy!—joy!—joy wholly unmerited by me. (*Frederick enters, surrounded by a number of servants, the Baron rushes towards him.*) He comes!—Oh let me clasp thee to this heart! (*He throws himself upon Frederick's neck, and clasps him in his arms.*) My son!!!

## A C T V.

SCENE I. *The Cottager's room, as in the second Act.*  
WILHELMINA, the COTTAGER, and his WIFE.

WILHELMINA.

GOOD Father, go out once more, and see whether he be not coming.

*Cottager.* That will not bring him, good woman!—I am but this moment come in, and have looked about every where, and can see nobody.

*Wife.* Only have a little patience—who knows whither he may be gone?

*Cottager.* Yes, indeed, he may be straggled into the town.

*Wife.* True, husband!—but he won't get much by that; people are hard-hearted enough in the town.

*Wilhel.* Yet go once more, I entreat you, father!—Perhaps he may soon come now.

*Cottager.* Directly!—to oblige you! [*Exit.*]

*Wife.* If your son did but know what God has been pleased to send in his absence, he'd have been here long ago.

*Wilhel.* I am so anxious.

*Wife.* How!—anxious!—One who has such a purse full of money cannot be anxious in mind;—that is to say, if she come by it honestly.

*Wilhel.*

*Wilhel.* Where can he stay so long?—He has been gone already four hours.—Some misfortune must have happened to him.

*Wife.* No, no!—What misfortune should happen?—It is still broad day-light. Be cheery, and of good heart; we'll have a good supper at night.—Oh, you may live a long time upon that money, and do whatever you please.—Is it not true that our Baron is a fine noble gentleman.

*Wilhel.* How can he have learnt that I was here?

*Wife.* Nay, that heaven only knows!—Mr. Frank was so secret.

*Wilhel.* (*Half aside.*) Does he then know me?—It must be so, else he would not have been so very liberal.

*Wife.* I don't think that follows!—Our good Baron is kind both to those he knows, and to strangers.

(*The Cottager re-enters, scratching his head.*)

*Wilhel.* (*as soon as she sees him*) Well! still no tidings.

*Cottager.* One might gape till one was blind, and not see him at last.

*Wilhel.* Ah, God!—what can come of this?

*Cottager.* I saw our good Pastor coming round the corner there.

*Wilhel.* Coming hither?

*Cottager.* Who knows?—he commonly comes hither once in three or four weeks, to enquire after us.

*Wife.* Yes, he is very attentive in visiting all his parishioners, and then he asks how we go on with our employments, and how we live among each other.—If there's any quarrels or discontents among us, he makes them up;—if any poor man is in great want he assists him.—You know, husband, how lately he sent one of his cows to the lame Michael.

*Cottager.* Yes, he sent him the best milk-cow, out of his yard.—God bless him for it!

*Wife.* God bless him!

SCENE

SCENE II. *Enter the PASTOR.*

*Pastor.* God bless you, my children!

*Cottager and Wife.* Thank you kindly, Sir!

*Cottager.* You are kindly welcome to us indeed.

*Wife.* (*reaches a chair, which she wipes with her apron*) Pray sit down!

*Cottager.* The weather is warm, let me fetch you a glass of beer.

*Wife.* Or some nice juicy pears.

*Pastor.* I thank you, good people, but I am not thirsty. You appear to have visitors.

*Cottager.* Ah! dear Sir, she is a poor woman, very sick and weak—we took her in here from the road.

*Pastor.* God will reward your goodness.

*Cottager.* He has rewarded it already.—We are as happy and joyful to day, as if we were going to the wake to-morrow—an't we Bet? (*holds out his hand to his wife.*)

*Wife.* Yes husband! (*she takes his hand and shakes it heartily.*)

*Pastor.* (*to Wilhelmina.*) Who are you, good woman?

*Wilhel.* I!—Ah, Sir!—(*in a half whisper*) Oh that we were alone!

*Pastor* (*to the Cottager*) Be so kind, John, as to leave me alone with this woman for a few minutes—I wish for some private conversation with her.

*Cottager.* Do you hear, Bet! come along. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *The PASTOR and WILHELMINA.*

*Pastor.* Well, my good woman, we are alone.

*Wilhel.* Before I tell you what I was, and who I am, allow me to ask you some questions. Are you a native of this country?

*Pastor.* No, I came from Franconia.

*Wilhel.* Did you know the worthy old Pastor, your predecessor?

*Pastor.* No.

H

*Wilhel.*

*Wilhel.* (*inquisitively*) You really then do not know any particulars of my unhappy story, and it was merely chance that brought you hither?

*Pastor.* If you are, indeed, the person I suppose you, and whom I have so long sought, your story is not wholly unknown to me.

*Wilhel.* Whom you suppose?—and whom you have so long sought?—who then gave you such a commission?

*Pastor.* A man who interests himself deeply in your fate.

*Wilhel.* Indeed—Oh quickly tell me then—whom do you suppose me to be?

*Pastor.* Wilhelmina Böettcher.

*Wilhel.* Yes, I am the unfortunate, seduced Wilhelmina!—and the man who takes so deep an interest in my fate—I suppose is Baron Wildenhain—he who robbed me of my innocence—the murderer of my father—who for twenty years consigned me and his child to misery, and who now hopes to atone for all, by a despicable purse of gold. (*Draws out the purse sent her by the Baron.*) I know not with what view you may now come hither, whether to reproach, or to console me; or whether to banish me from these borders, that my presence may not be a reproach to the voluptuary—but one request I have earnestly to make you!—carry back this purse to the man who has ruined me—tell him, that my virtue was not to be bartered for gold—that gold cannot repay me for my lost peace of mind, nor can the curse of an aged parent be redeemed by gold. Tell him, that the poor starving Wilhelmina, though clothed in beggar's rags, is still too proud in spirit to receive benefits from her seducer. We have no feelings now in common with each other—he despised my heart—with equal contempt I spurn his gold!—he has trampled me under foot—I trample under foot his gold. (*She throws the purse disdainfully upon the ground.*) But he shall be left to his repose—wholly to his repose—he shall live as hitherto, in mirth and cheerfulness, nor shall the sight of Wilhelmina embitter his pleasures. As soon as I have somewhat



what recovered my strength, I will for ever leave the place, where the name of Wildenhain, and the grave of my poor father, bow me to the ground; and tell him that I knew not he was returned from Franconia, knew not that he was so near me!--Assure him earnestly of this, or he may believe that I came hither in search of him.---Oh he must not believe that!--And now, Sir, you see that your presence, the object of your visit, have exhausted my little strength.---I know not how to say more---I know not what more he who sent you can require of me, (*with indignation.*) Yet one thing farther, perhaps the Baron has recollected, that he once promised me marriage---that on his knees before me, he called on God to witness his vows, and pledged his honour for their performance---but tell him not to be uneasy on that account, for the remembrance has long since been banished from my bosom.

*Pastor.* I have listened to you with patience, that I might learn your whole sentiments of the Baron, and your own peculiar ways of thinking. In this unprepared moment, when your full heart overflowed, you doubtless have not dissembled, and I rejoice to find you a woman of the noblest sentiments, worthy of the highest atonement that a man of honour--a man of strict honour can make you.---With what satisfaction therefore, can I correct an error, which, has perhaps, occasioned much of the bitterness you have expressed against the Baron. Had he known that the sick woman in this cottage was Wilhelmina Böettcher, and had sent to *her* this purse, he had deserved that his own son should be his murderer!--but no! believe me, no!--this has he not done. Look me in the face, my profession demands confidence, but, independently of that, you surely would believe me incapable of a falshood --and I do solemnly assure you, that it was chance alone, made you the object of his bounty, which he believed was exercised towards an entire stranger.

*Wilhel.* How, Sir!--Would you persuade me, that such a present as this was the effect of chance!--To a

H 2

stranger

stranger one sends a florin, a dollar, but not a purse of gold.

*Pastor.* I grant it is extraordinary--but the occasion was extraordinary. Your son--

*Wilhel.* What! my Son?

*Pastor.* Be calm. An affectionate Son begged for his Mother--that affected the Baron.

*Wilhel.* Begged of the Baron!--of his Father!

*Pastor.* Even so!--but understand, that neither knew the other--and that the mother received this present for the sake of the son.

*Wilhel.* Knew not each other!--And where is my son?

*Pastor.* At the castle.

*Wilhel.* And still they are unknown to each other?

*Pastor.* No--all is now revealed, and I am sent hither by the Baron, not to an unknown sick-woman, but to Wilhelmina Böettcher, not with money, but with a commission to act as my own heart shall dictate.

*Wilhel.* Your heart!--oh Sir, pledge not your feelings for those of this obdurate man!--Yet will the woman forget, what she has suffered for his sake, if he only will atone for it to the mother--the woman will pardon him, if he deserve the Mother's thanks. In what state then is my Frederick--how has the Baron received him?

*Pastor.* I left him overcome by violent emotions--it was even then the moment of discovery--nothing was yet decided--yet, doubtless, at this instant the son is clasped in his father's arms. I will warrant that his heart--

*Wilhel.* Again his heart!--heavens how is the heart of this man thus suddenly changed?--for twenty years deaf to the voice of nature!--

*Pastor.* You do him injustice!--hear before you judge him. Many errors appear to us at the first view detestable--but if we knew all that led to them, all the intervening circumstances which insensibly prompted to the deed, all the trifles whose influence is so imperceptible, and yet so great, how might our opinions be

be altered.---Could we have accompanied the offender step by step, instead of, as now, seeing only the first, the tenth, and the twentieth, often indeed, should we exculpate, where we at present condemn. Far be it from me to defend the Baron's misconduct, but this I dare assert, that even a good man may once in his life be guilty of a lapse, without deserving to forfeit entirely his character for goodness. Where is the demi-god, who can dare to vaunt, my conscience is clear, pure as falling snow!--and if such a boaster live, for God's sake trust him not, he is far more dangerous than a repentant sinner.---Pardon my diffuseness;--in a few words you shall now have the Baron's story since your separation.---At that time he loved you most sincerely, but the fear of his rigid mother prevented the fulfilment of his vows. The war recalled him to the field, where he was severely wounded, made a prisoner, and for a whole year was confined to his bed, unable to write to you, or to obtain any information concerning you.---Then did your image first begin to grow fainter in his mind. In consequence of his dangerous wounds, he was carried from the field of battle to a neighbouring mansion, the owner of which was a man of rank and benevolence, possessed of a large estate, and the father of a beautiful daughter. The maiden was particularly pleased with the young man, scarcely ever left his bedside, nursed him like a sister, and shed tears for his sufferings, to which the Baron's heart could not be insensible. Philanthropy and gratitude knit the bands, which death tore asunder but a few weeks since. Thus was the remembrance of you obliterated. He exchanged his native country for a noble residence in Franconia; he became a husband, a father, and employed himself in the improvement of his estates--no object that he beheld reminded him of you, nor could any thing revive your image in his mind, till his life became embittered by domestic feuds. Too late he discovered in his wife, a proud, imperious woman, a spoiled child possessing a spirit of contradiction, and pertinaciously adhering to her own opinions. She

seemed to have rescued him from death, merely to torment him to death herself. Chance at that time conducted me to his house--I gained his friendship--I became the instructor of his only daughter, and was soon admitted to his confidence.--Oh how often has he with a distressed heart, said, "This woman revenges on me the wrongs of my *Wilhelmina*."--How often has he cursed, the wealth, which his wife brought him, and in fancy enjoyed a less brilliant, but more happy lot, in your arms. When at length this living became vacant, and he offered me the cure, the first words with which he accompanied the proposal were "my Friend, there will you learn what is become of my *Wilhelmina*."--Every letter that I afterwards received from him, contained this exclamation--"Still no tidings of my *Wilhelmina*!"--These letters are now in my possession--you may see them. I never was able to discover the place of your abode, fate prevented it--having in its view this more important day.

*Wilhel.* You have affected me much--and the emotions which I feel press conviction to my heart. How will all this end?--What now is to become of me?

*Pastor.* The Baron did not indeed signify to me his intentions should you be found, but your wrongs demand atonement, and I know but of one way in which it can be made:--Exalted woman! If your strength permit you to accompany me--my carriage waits--the road is short and easy,

*Wilhel.* I go with you?--Go before the Baron in these rags?

*Pastor.* And wherefore not?

*Wilhel.* Will they not reproach him?

*Pastor.* Noble-minded woman!--come with me then; we will stop at my house; my sister will quickly furnish you with clothes.

*Wilhel.* But shall I find my Frederick at the castle?

*Pastor.* Most certainly!

*Wilhel.*



*Wilhel. (rising.)* Well!--for his sake then I will submit to this arduous task!--He is the only branch on which my hopes still blossom--the rest are all withered, dead!--But where are my good Host and Hostess, that I may take my leave, and thank them?

*Pastor. (takes up the purse, goes to the door and calls.)* Here, Neighbour!--John!

SCENE IV. *Enter COTTAGER and his WIFE.*

*Cottager.* Here I am!

*Wife.* Thank God, she is upon her legs, once more! I am heartily glad of it.

*Pastor.* Yes, good people, I will take this woman with me--she will have better accommodations.

*Cottager.* Yes, indeed!--she is but badly off here.

*Wife.* We were glad to do the best we could for her, but we could do but forrily after all.

*Pastor.* You have acted like worthy people--take that as a reward for your kindness! (*Offers the purse to the Cottager, who puts his hands before him, plays with his fingers in his waistcoat, looks at the money, and shakes his head.*) Will you not take it? (*Offers it to the wife; she plays with her apron, looks at it with half-averted eyes, and shakes her head.*) What is your objection?

*Cottager.* Pray don't take it amiss, good Sir; I can't think of being paid for doing my duty.

*Wife. (Looking up to heaven.)* There we look for our reward.

*Pastor. (laying a hand on the shoulder of each, much affected.)* That you will!--Heaven bless you both!

*Wilhel.* You will not refuse my thanks?

*Cottager.* You are kindly welcome.

*Wife.* Yes, you are heartily welcome.

*Wilhel.* Farewell, kind people!--(*she shakes them both by the hand.*)

*Cottager.* Farewell, farewell!--I hope you'll soon be better.

*Wife.* And if you ever come this way, pray call in.

*Pastor.* God preserve you! (*Offers his arm to Wilhelmina, who takes hold of it, wipes the tears from her eyes, and supports herself by a stick in the other hand.*)

*Cottager.*

*Cottager.* Adieu, good Pastor! (*Pulls off his hat, and makes many scrapings with his foot.*)

*Wife.* And I thank you kindly for this visit.

*Both.* And we hope that you will come again soon. (*They go to the door with the Pastor and Wilhelmina.*)

*Cottager.* (*taking his wife by the hand.*) Well, Bet, what think you? How shall we sleep to-night?

*Wife.* (*pressing his hand.*) As sound as tops.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*A Room in the Castle.*

*The Baron sits on a sofa, exhausted by various emotions—Frederick stands by, bending over him, and pressing one of the Baron's hands between his.*

*Baron.* So, you have really seen service—smelt gunpowder—I'd lay my life, young man, that as Frederick von Wildenhain, you had been spoiled both by father and mother; but as Frederick Böettcher, you are grown to be a brave fellow. Thou hast hitherto been exposed to hardships and dangers—thy youthful path has not been strewed with roses! Well, well, Frederick, it shall be otherwise now—the future shall reward thee for the past. The opprobrium of thy birth shall be removed—Indeed it shall. I will publicly acknowledge thee as my only son, and as heir to my estates!—What say'st thou to this?

*Fred.* And my mother?

*Baron.* Oh, fear not that she shall starve!—Thou can'st not suppose that thy father will do things by halves. Knowest thou not that Wildenhain is one of the best estates in this country, and only a mile from hence lies Wellendorf, a little estate of mine? Besides, through my wife, God rest her soul! I have three large manors in Franconia.

*Fred.* But my mother?

*Baron.* I was going to say, that your mother shall have her choice of an abode. If she does not like Franconia, she may remain at Wellendorf. There is a neat house, neither too large nor too small—a pretty garden, and in a delightful country—in short, a paradise

life in miniature. There shall she want for nothing—there shall a happy old age smooth the furrows which a youth of sorrow has made in her cheeks.

*Fred. (starting back)* How?

*Baron.* Yes, indeed!—And you know, Frederick, as the distance is not great, in the morning, should we be inclined to make your mother a visit, 'tis only to saddle the horses, and we can be there in an hour.

*Fred.* Indeed!—And by what name shall my mother be called?

*Baron. (confused)* How?

*Fred.* Is she to be considered as your housekeeper, or your mistress?

*Baron.* Fool!

*Fred.* I understand you!—and will withdraw myself, my father, that you may have time to consider of your resolution; only I assure you, by all that is most dear, most sacred to me, (nor can any thing shake my determination) that my fate is inseparably united to my mother's—it must be Wilhelmina von Wildenhain, and Frederick von Wildenhain, or Wilhelmina Böettcher and Frederick Böettcher. *[Exit.*

*Baron.* So!—What would he then?—Surely he does not mean that I should marry his mother?—Young man! young man! thou must not presume to prescribe laws to thy father!—I thought I had arranged every thing admirably well—I was as happy as a king—I had relieved my conscience of a burden, and was recovering my breath, then comes this fellow and rolls another great stone in the path over which I must stumble. Well, well, friend Conscience, God be thanked, thou and I are friends again.—Hey! how's this? What am I to understand?—Thou art silent—or rather seemest to murmur a little!

#### SCENE VI.—Enter the PASTOR.

*Baron.* You are come in happy time, my friend, my conscience and I have commenced a suit, and such suits properly belong to your jurisdiction.

*Pastor.* Your conscience is in the right.

*Baron.*

*Baron.* Hey, hey, Mr. Judge, not so partial if you please!--you know not what the question is.

*Pastor.* Conscience is always in the right, for it never speaks but when it is in the right.

*Baron.* Well,—but I am not yet certain whether it speaks, or is silent; only in such cases persons of your profession have quicker ears than our own. Listen then, a few words will state the case.—I have found my son, (*Clapping his hand on his shoulder*) a fine, noble youth, good Pastor! full of fire as a Frenchman, proud as an Englishman, and full of honour as a German.—Be this as it may, I mean to remove the opprobrium of his illegitimacy.—Am I not right in this?

*Pastor.* Perfectly right!

*Baron.* And his mother shall, in her old age, lead an affluent and happy life. I will give her my estate of Wellendorf, there may she live, form it according to her taste, live again in her son, and in her grandchildren.—Am I not right in this?

*Pastor.* No.

*Baron.* (*Standing back.*) No!--What then should I do?

*Pastor.* Marry her!

*Baron.* No surely!

*Pastor.* Baron Wildenhain is a man who does not act without reason.—I stand here as the advocate of your conscience, and request to know upon what grounds you now proceed—and I will answer you.

*Baron.* Would you have me marry a beggar?

*Pastor.* (*after a pause.*) Is that all?

*Baron.* (*confused.*) No,—I have further grounds:—much further!

*Pastor.* May I request to know them?

*Baron.* (*still much confused.*) I am a Nobleman.

*Pastor.* What more?

*Baron.* People will point their fingers at me.

*Pastor.* Proceed.—

*Baron.* My relations will look askance at me.

*Pastor.* Well.

*Baron.*



*Baron.* And---and---(*very hastily*) plague take it, I can recollect nothing more!

*Pastor.* Now, then, it is my turn to speak. But before I begin, let me put a few questions to you: Did Wilhelmina, through coquetry, lay herself open to seduction.

*Baron.* No, no, she was always a modest, prudent girl.

*Pastor.* Did it cost you much trouble to subdue her virtue.

*Baron.* (*shortly.*) Yes.

*Pastor.* Did you not promise her marriage? (*the Baron hesitates, the Pastor asks again more earnestly.*) Did you not promise her marriage?

*Baron.* Yes.

*Pastor.* And called God to witness your promise?

*Baron.* Yes.

*Pastor.* And pledged your honour for its performance?

*Baron.* (*impatiently.*) The devil!—Yes!

*Pastor.* Well then, my Lord,—God was your witness—God, who saw you at that moment, and who sees you now.—Your honour was your pledge, which you must now redeem, if you are indeed a man of honour. I now stand before you, impressed with the dignity of my sublime vocation, and dare speak to you as to the lowest of your peasants; my duty requires it, and I will fulfil my duty, even at the hazard of your friendship. Did you, as a thoughtless youth, who lives only for the present moment, seduce an innocent girl without thinking on the consequences; but, in maturer years, repenting of your youthful follies, have you to the utmost of your power repaired your faults, then are you indeed a man deserving the esteem of the honest and the virtuous.—But—has the voluptuous youth, through wicked snares, involved a guiltless creature in misery, and deprived a maiden of her virtue, her happiness, to satisfy the passion of a moment? Did he pledge his word of honour in intoxication, and offer up his conscience as a sacrifice to his desires, and believes he that all is to be atoned for by a handful

handful of gold, of which chance alone makes him the possessor.—Oh, does not such an one deserve—Pardon my warmth, my lord! it might injure a good cause, were it not here most natural. Farewell the good old days of chivalry. The virtues of our ancestors, their high sense of honour, their reverence for female delicacy, are buried in one common grave; nothing now remains but the most trivial or the worst part, their titles, and their single combats. A victory over innocence is in these days a deed of heroism, of which the conqueror vaunts over his bottle, while the poor object of seduction, drowned in her tears, curses the murderer of her honour and peace of mind, and perhaps harbours the horrid thought of being the murderer of the infant she bears. I repeat, then, my Lord, that you ought to keep your word, even tho' you were a prince! A prince may indeed be released by the state from its performance, but never can be acquitted by his own conscience!—Have you not reason then to thank God, that you are not a prince? that it is in your power to purchase repose of heart, that highest of all treasures, at so cheap a price?—The resolution to marry Wilhelmina is not even a merit, for this union will increase your own happiness. 'Tis pity indeed that it costs you no sacrifice, that your whole fortune is not at stake; then might you well come forth, and say, do I not act nobly? I marry Wilhelmina!—But now, since Wilhelmina brings you such a dowry, greater than any princess could bestow—repose to your conscience, and a son so worthy of your affection.—Now may you exclaim with me,—with me joy, my friend! I marry Wilhelmina!

*Baron. (During this speech he has appeared extremely agitated, now walking backwards and forwards, then pausing—one moment testifying indignation, the next the most affecting emotions—at length when the Pastor has done speaking, he approaches him with open arms, presses him to his bosom, and exclaims.)* My Friend, with me joy, I marry Wilhelmina!!!

*Pastor. (returning his embrace.)* I do wish you joy!

*Baron.*

*Baron.* Where is she?—have you seen her?

*Pastor.* She is in your study. To avoid observation I conducted her in through the garden.

*Baron.* Well then, this shall be the wedding day!—You, my Friend, shall give us your blessing this very evening.

*Pastor.* Oh no! not so hastily—not so privately.—The whole village was witness to Wilhelmina's shame—it must also be witness to the restoration of her honour. Three Sundays successively must the bans be published; are you content that it shall be so?

*Baron.* I am content.

*Pastor.* And then will we solemnize a happy nuptial feast, and the whole village shall unite in jubilee on the occasion. Are you satisfied?

*Baron.* Perfectly.

*Pastor.* Is the suit now decided?—is your conscience easy?

*Baron.* Completely so—I wish only that the first interview were over. I feel the same shame in appearing before her whom I have injured, as a thief before the man he has robbed.

*Pastor.* Be calm!—Wilhelmina's heart is your judge.

*Baron.* And then—Wherefore should I not confess it? prejudices are like old wounds! when the weather changes they still smart.—I—I cannot help feeling somewhat ashamed, when I think that all must be known to my daughter—to the count—to all my domestics. I would it were already over—till it is, I will not see Wilhelmina, that when we meet, nothing may remain but joy—but transport!—Frank! (*calls to a Huntsman who enters*) Where are my daughter and the count?

*Huntsman.* In the dining-room, my lord.

*Baron.* Desire them to come hither. [*Exit Huntsman.*] Remain here with me, good Pastor! that the coxcomb with his privy-chamber airs, may not disconcert me. I shall speak my mind to him clearly and concisely, and when that is done, let his horses be put to the carriage, and he may go with his *pommade* to the devil.

SCENE VII.—*Enter AMELIA and the COUNT.*

*Count.* *Nous voila à vos ordres, mon Colonel!* we have taken a most *delicieuse promenade*. Wildenhain is an earthly paradise, and possesses an Eve, who resembles the mother of all mankind—only *il manquoit un Adam*, who might take with extasies from her hand even the apple of death itself!—But now he is found, *cet Adam!* he is found!

*Baron.* Who is found?—Frederick, but not Adam.

*Count.* Frederick?—Who is this Frederick?

*Baron.* My son!—my only son!

*Count.* *Comment?* Your Lordship's son?—*Mon Pere* informed me that you had only this daughter.

*Baron.* Your *Pere* could not know that I had a son, for I knew it myself but a few minutes ago.

*Count.* *Vous parlez des enigmes.*

*Baron.* In short, the young man who attacked us on the highway to-day—You may remember it well, as you ran away so fast.

*Count.* I have a confused remembrance of it. But—

*Baron.* Well, he is my son!

*Count.* He?—but how is it possible to believe this?

*Baron.* Yes he! (*aside to the Pastor*) Speak for me, I am ashamed before that coxcomb.

*Pastor.* A man like you abashed before such an animal!

*Baron.* He is my natural son.—But what of that—before the expiration of many weeks, I shall marry his mother, and whoever shall dare to sneer at it, shall be properly chastised. Yes, yes, Amelia, look up my child, you have found a brother.

*Amelia.* (*with ecstacy*) Are you not joking? may I believe it?

*Count.* And may one ask the name of his mother?—Is she of family?

*Baron.* She is—good Pastor, tell him what she is!

*Pastor.* A beggar.

*Count.* (*laughing*) *Vous badinez!*

*Pastor.*



*Pastor.* Her name, if you wish to know it, Wilhelmina Böettcher.

*Count.* Von Böettcher? I never heard of the family.

*Baron.* She belongs to the family of honest people, and that is a damn'd small one.

*Count.* Quite a *Mesalliance* then?

*Pastor.* Generosity and integrity, unite themselves with love and constancy.—Call that a *Mesalliance* if you please.

*Count.* It must be acknowledged, that one ought to be *un Oedipe*, in order to develope all these riddles.—*Un fils naturel! à la bonne heure, mon Colonel!*—Why I have two. There must be *moments* in a man's life, when if a pretty girl fall in his way—such things happen every day. But *mon dieu!* one never troubles one's head with such beings—unless to put them to some trade perhaps, and so make them useful in the world. Mine are both to be made *friseurs*.

*Baron.* And mine shall be a nobleman—and inherit the estates of Wildenheim and Wellendorf.

*Count.* *Me voila stupefait!*—Most charming young lady, I must plead your cause.—they are *au point de vous écraser*.

*Amelia.* Do not give yourself that trouble.

*Count.* *La fille unique!—L'unique heretiere.*

*Amelia.* *Il me reste l'amour de mon pere!*

*Baron.* Bravo, Amelia!—bravo!—Come hither, and let me give you a kiss! (*Amelia flies into his arms*)  
*Count,* you will do me a favour, if you will take yourself away. A scene may, perhaps, pass here, from which you will derive no satisfaction.

*Count.* *De tout mon cœur!*—At present, if I mistake not, we have *clair de lune*, and I shall be enabled this very evening to return into the town.

*Baron.* As you please.

*Count.* *A dire vrai, mon Colonel!* I came not hither to seek a *voleur de grand chemin* as brother-in-law, nor a *Gueuse* as a step-mother. *Henri! Henri!*

[*Skips out.*]

SCENE VIII.---*The BARON, AMELIA, and PASTOR.*

*Baron. (Still clasping Amelia in his arms)* Ah, I breathe more freely!--And now a word with you, my Amelia--Twenty years ago, your father was guilty of a lapse--seduced a poor girl, and gave existence to a child, who till this day has wandered about the world in meanness and poverty. The circumstance has pressed upon my mind like a rock of granite--You may remember how many an evening I have spent in gloom and deep dejection--with my eyes fixed as I sat in my arm-chair smoking my pipe--not hearing you when you spoke, not smiling when you caressed me--then was it that my conscience upbraided me--that all my wealth, my rank, nor even you, my child, could procure me the repose which a spotless mind alone can feel. Now I have found both wife and son; and this worthy man (*pointing to the Pastor*) as well as this (*pointing to his heart*) both tell me 'tis my duty publicly to acknowledge them as such. What think you?

*Amelia. (caressing him)* My father need not ask that.

*Baron.* Will not the loss you must experience, cost you one sigh? Will a father's repose pay you for all?

*Amelia.* What loss?

*Baron.* You were considered as my only heiress.

*Amelia. (tenderly reproving him)* Oh my Father!

*Baron.* You lose two fine estates.

*Amelia.* But a Brother's love will amply repay them.

*Baron.* And mine! (*pressing her eagerly to his bosom.*)

*Pastor. (turning aside.)* Oh why not mine also!

*Baron. (to the Pastor.)* My friend, for a victory over one prejudice, I have to thank you! for a victory over a second, I must thank myself!--A man like you, the teacher, and the image of virtue, raises his profession to one of the noblest that the world can boast. Were all your brethren like yourself, christianity might well be proud of them!--you are a NOBLE MAN--I am only a Nobleman--or, if I am now likely to become more, it is to you I shall be indebted for  
the

the change. I am indeed very much your debtor—Amelia, will you pay for me? (*Amelia looks at her father doubtfully for a few moments, then lets fall her hands, turns to the Pastor, and flies into his arms.*)

*Pastor.* (in the utmost astonishment.) My God!—my Lord Baron!

*Baron.* Silence, silence! Not a word.

*Amelia.* (*kissing him*) Silence! silence! You, indeed, love me! (*The Pastor loosens himself from her arms, bursts into tears, attempts to speak, but is unable—he goes up to the Baron, takes his hand, and is about pressing it to his mouth, when the Baron withdraws his hand, and presses him in his arms.*)

*Amelia.* Oh, I am so happy!

*Baron.* (*withdrawing his arms from the Pastor.*)—Enough, enough!—Oh, I could cry like a child!—Suffer me, suffer me to compose myself a few moments—I have yet another scene to come, more heart-affecting than even this—Now, dearest son, in a few minutes all shall be accomplished, and the last rays of the declining sun shall beam upon the happiest group in Nature's wide-extended kingdom.—Where is Wilhelmina?

*Pastor.* I will fetch her.

*Baron.* Stop!—my mind is agitated! my heart throbs!—one moment to recover myself. (*He walks backwards and forwards, breathes with difficulty, and casts his eyes frequently towards the door of the adjoining room.*) That way will she come—that was my mother's chamber—thence have I often seen her come—have feasted on her sweet smile—how can I bear now to see her sorrow-worn countenance?—Frederick must plead for me—Where is my Frederick? (*calls*) Frank! (*Huntsman enters.*) Where is my son?

*Huntsman.* In his room.

*Baron.* Desire him to come hither! (*to the Pastor.*) Now!—my heart beats eagerly! Haste! Haste!—conduct her in! (*The Pastor goes out of the side door—the Baron turns towards it, but starts back some steps, while all his features betray the greatest agitation.*)

**SCENE IX.**—*Enter the PASTOR, conducting in WILHELMINA—the BARON catches her speechless in his arms—she almost faints. The BARON and PASTOR place her in a chair ; the BARON kneels before her, with one arm round her waist, and her hand pressed in the other.*

*Baron.* Wilhelmina ! know you not my voice ?

*Wilhel.* (tenderly and faintly) Wildenhain !

*Baron.* Can you forgive me ?

*Wilhel.* I forgive you !

*Fred.* (enters hastily) My mother's voice !— Oh, mother !—father ! (He throws himself on his knees by the other side of his mother—she bends tenderly over both—the Pastor stands with his eyes gratefully turned towards heaven—Amelia leans on his shoulder, and wipes the tears from her eyes.

*The curtain falls.*

**END OF THE PLAY.**



SKETCH  
OF THE  
LIFE AND WRITINGS  
OF  
KOTZEBUE\*.

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KOTZEBUE ranks equally high in the list of German literati, considered both as a dramatic writer, and as a writer of novels and romances. In the former line he is justly allowed to be on a par with Schiller, Island, Beck, Schröder, Wieland, Göthe, and Klopstock, among living authors; and Lessing and even Gessner, among the deceased ones.

He is a native of Weimar in Saxony, a small but highly-polished city, which has frequently been called "*Paris in miniature*." Here he cultivated an early acquaintance with the Muses, by his unremitting attention to the dramatic performances

\* The Authoress acknowledges her obligations for a part of the materials contained in it, to a paper in the *Monthly Magazine* for August last.

formances of that place, then in eminent repute, on account of the refined taste and correct judgment of the actors and audience. KOTZEBUE's decided predilection for the drama, in theory as well as in practice, is obvious from several passages alluding to this subject, in his own works. Yet, it is certain that he never condescended to perform on a public stage; and that all his attempts as an actor were confined to private theatres, established among select parties of literary friends. Thus he obtained the double advantage of indulging himself in his favourite amusement, and at the same time of performing dramatic pieces of his own composition, and deciding on their merits, in a contracted circle of candid discerning critics, before he ventured to present them to the public.

KOTZEBUE was educated for the law, which he practised for a considerable number of years, in various eminent stations, till he was appointed president of the high college of Justice in the Russian province of Livonia. At Revel, in this province, he appears, in conjunction with other friends, to have established a private theatre, at which some of his own pieces were first performed, that before us being of the number. Here also he wrote the greater number of his dramatic works, as well as his miscellaneous compositions in the department of the *Belles Lettres*. His numerous performances are the more surprising, as his

his leisure time, till lately, must have been remarkably short, on account of the multiplicity and importance of his other avocations, which required the whole of his attention, while he held the distinguished office before-mentioned. Fortunately, however, for the Muses, and particularly those of the German stage, he met with a number of invidious opponents in Livonia, who magnified every trifling foible of his private conduct into a crime of the first magnitude, and persecuted him with such unrelenting malignity, that he thought proper to retire from this splendid office of state, and to devote the remainder of his life to the service of a more grateful public. Hence he betook himself entirely to literary pursuits, and having left the Russian dominions he repaired to the court of Vienna, where he readily obtained the appointment of "*Dramatist to the Imperial theatre.*" It is unnecessary to detail here the complicated intrigues carried on under the late Empress of Russia in every province of her extensive empire; and the frequent persecutions which foreigners promoted to office sustained from the semi-barbarous natives. Let it suffice to observe, that they too often succeeded in their nefarious designs against those aliens, whom they hated both on account of their superior talents, and their abhorrence of Russian sloth and drunkenness. KOTZEBUE was one of the many objects of persecution in Russia, although his moral character

rafter must have been unexceptionable ; as it is not probable that the Emperor of Germany would otherwise have appointed him to be his " dramatic poet."

The merits of this writer in the wide field of the drama are not unknown in this country, as some of his productions in that line have been translated into the English language. But from the metamorphosed state in which German translations generally appear before the English public, it is not an easy matter to ascertain the due and relative merits of either author or translator. Of about thirty dramatic pieces of various merit, published by KOTZEBUE, we know of only five which have yet appeared in an English translation—" Misanthrophy and Repentance"—" The Negro slaves"—" Count Benjowsky"—" The Indians in England"—and " The Natural Son." The first of these, under the title of " The Stranger," was performed with great applause (though in a very mutilated condition) at Drury-Lane Theatre last winter, and for a considerable part of the season attracted brilliant and crowded audiences. The latter, under the title of " Lover's Vows," promises to be an equally great favourite at Covent-Garden Theatre during the ensuing winter.

The success of these pieces holds forth great encouragement to translate others of KOTZEBUE's dramatic works, which would doubtless prove  
equally



equally interesting to an English audience. That more of these admirable productions have not hitherto been brought forward to public notice, may be ascribed partly to the great difference which has been supposed to subsist between the national taste and manners of the English and those of the Germans, particularly with regard to their dramatic compositions; and partly to a certain air of singularity in the writings of KOTZEBUE, which characterises and distinguishes his productions from those of all other modern writers. But the experiment has been made, and the event has proved this idea to be unfounded.

KOTZEBUE's knowledge of the human heart, and its secret meanders is unquestionably great; he has not only made the prevailing manners, oddities, and vices of the age, but also man himself, as influenced by a variety of ardent passions, the object of the minutest research. Few writers have ever attained to his excellence in delineating whimsical and impassioned characters; and in scenes drawn from private and domestic life, he eminently excels his cotemporary rivals both in the unaffected delicacy of the sentiments he conveys, and the freedom and precision with which he introduces them. His language, if not remarkably brilliant, is yet generally correct, and dignified; his comic scenes abound with genuine wit and humour, untinged with the vulgarity into which writers in that line are too apt to deviate

viate; and his pathetic scenes are no less distinguished for those delicate touches of nature which appeal in the most forcible manner to the heart. His plans are formed with great art, and developed for the most part in an unexpected, yet probable and successful manner.

With respect to the transactions in KOZTEBUE's life, a few circumstances only have transpired to public notice. It is known, that in his youth he was a favourite pupil of the late professor Musæus\* of Weimar, under whose care and tuition he was educated; that he left the Russian dominions chiefly on account of his celebrated work above-noticed, called "The Life of Count Benjowsky," which contained many private anecdotes relative to the cruelties practised by order of the late Empress of Russia; and, soon after his arrival at Vienna, he was appointed Imperial dramatist, in which situation, at present, his merits and talents meet with that reward and degree of public esteem, which he so amply deserves.

\* The name of MUSÆUS is never mentioned in Germany but with pleasure and respect. "His Popular Tales of the Germans" were translated into English, about seven or eight years since; and although the simplicity and humour of Musæus's spirit are not fully transfused into the translation, yet every candid reader must allow that the work possesses uncommon merit, and will consider it as an ample testimony of the author's talents and ingenuity.



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